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EVER WONDER WHAT THE EARTH LOOKS LIKE FROM 60,000 METRES UP? A METRO READER WILL BE AMONG THE FIRST TO FIND OUT PAGE 14

VANCOUVER metro®

...sday, March 7, 2012

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A fan works the crowd prior to the start of the 99th Grey Cup game between the B.C. Lions and the Winnipeg Blue Bombers at BC Place in Vancouver. JEFF VINNICK/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Grey Cup pumps $118M into economy

CFL. 99th championship game a financial success for city, with more big sporting events to come thanks to Olympic spinoff: Tourism Vancouver official

MATT KIELTYKA
matt.kieltyka@metronews.ca

The Lions may have been sipping from the Grey Cup, but local businesses were taking gulps out of the golden chalice in November.

The B.C. Lions and Tourism Vancouver announced Tuesday that the 99th Grey Cup at BC Place last year generated "in excess" of $118 million in economic impact.

The Canadian Football League championship game and weeklong festival brought in 59,005 overnight visitors from outside the Metro Vancouver region during a month that's traditionally a slow one for tourism.

"It was a tremendous boost to the local economy, no question," said Tourism Vancouver vice-president Walt Judas. "It's a big bonus for us."

Out-of-town visitors made up 33 per cent of the fans that came out for the game and Raise the Roof Festival and spent $42.8 million over the four days that were measured.

Signature events like the Grey Cup are a big deal for tourism in particular and there's more to come, according to Judas.

While the Grey Cup is a national affair, Judas says the Olympics have cemented the city's reputation as a world-class event host.

The city recently hosted the CONCACAF women's soccer Olympic qualifiers and Davis Cup tennis event. Vancouver will also be one of the host cities for the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup.

"A lot of international sporting organizations seek us out," said Judas. "And when we go to them, they're familiar with Vancouver and recognize its ability to stage these events."

According to the report released Tuesday, the Grey Cup employed 826 people.

Out-of-town visitors stayed in Vancouver for an average of 4.15 days and they spent an average of $726.04.

Teachers rally draws 5,000

Liberals stand firm in face of gathering at legislature PAGE 6

Where stars shine bright

Hit the Palm Springs film festival PAGE 27

Oppal stands behind inquiry

Aboriginals feeling ignored in Pickton probe PAGE 3

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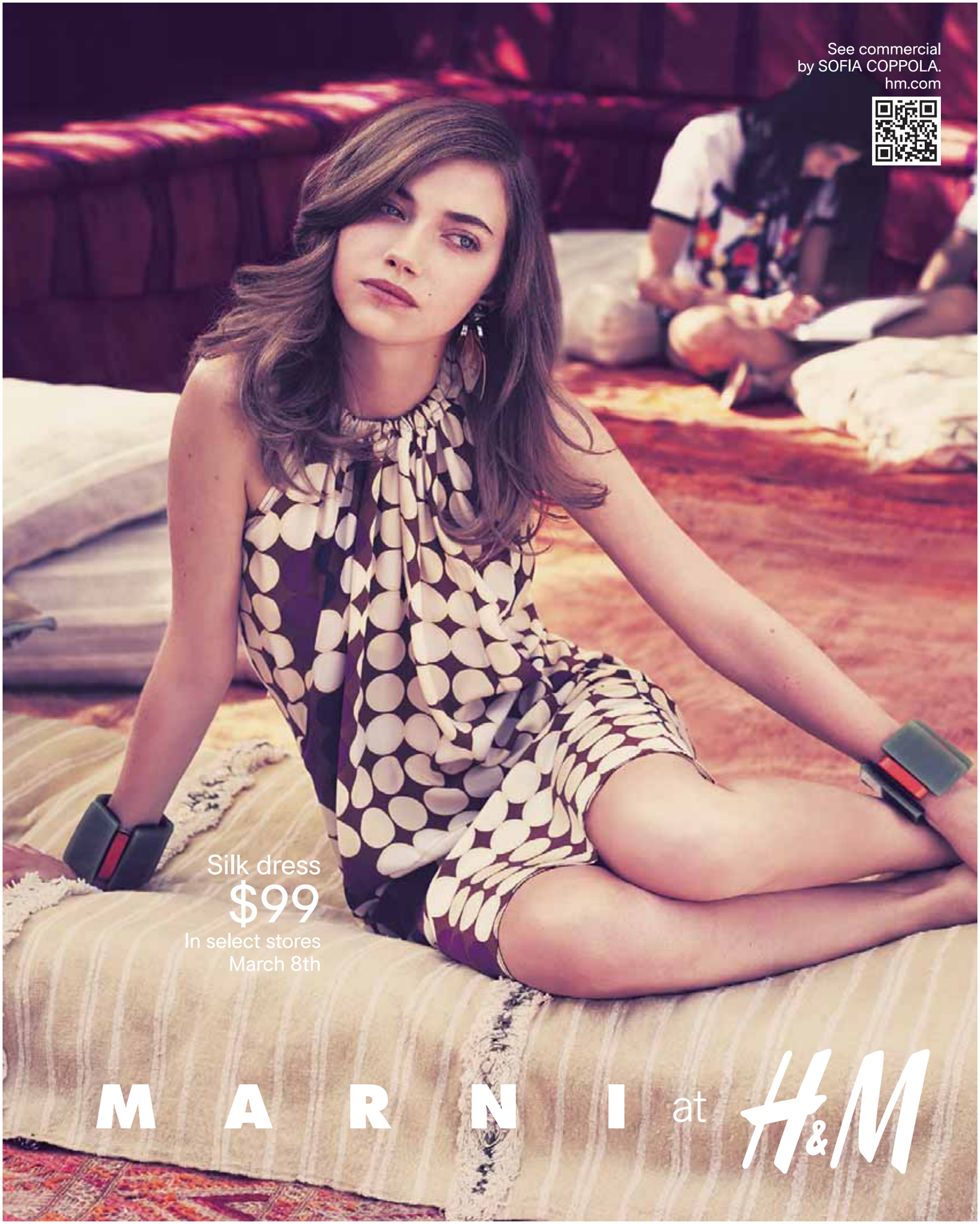
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On the roads

Police in Vancouver ticket motorists.
KRISTEN THOMPSON/

Motorists using cellphones a growing problem: Police

The use of hand-held cellphones by motorists appears to be on the rise, police said Tuesday following a one-month traffic-enforcement blitz.

RCMP traffic services in the Lower Mainland handed out 4,449 tickets for using an electronic device while driving in February, almost double the 2,300 tickets written during the same period in 2011.

"It shows that drivers aren't taking the dangers of using hand-held devices while driving seriously," RCMP Supt. Norm Gaumont said in a release.

The province's new distracted-driving law, which took effect Feb. 1, 2010, penalizes drivers who use hand-held devices with a fine of $167. Anyone caught texting or emailing while driving also gets three demerit points.

Distracted driving was blamed in 27 deaths in 2011, down from 46 in 2010.

"They are putting the lives of others and their own at risk by not paying attention to the road," Gaumont added. "The Lower Mainland traffic-enforcement blitz also saw 3,516 tickets issued for speeding, 2,550 for not wearing a seatbelt and 2,164 for intersection infractions like running red lights."

JEFF HODSON/METRO

Wally Oppal is the commissioner of the inquiry looking into missing and murdered women. JEFF HODSON/METRO FILE

Oppal defends Pickton probe amid criticism

Missing women's inquiry. Activists allege aboriginals have been silenced and the inquiry favours the police

The head of a public inquiry into the Robert Pickton case defended the process Tuesday against allegations it's ignoring the voices of aboriginals, as a lawyer appointed to represent that community resigned and one of the few remaining First Nations groups left in the process pulled out.

Aboriginal activists have long dismissed the inquiry as lopsided and favouring the police, and the latest departures suggest commissioner Wally Oppal has so far been unable to convince the First Nations community he's committed to listening to them.

The first to leave was Robyn Gervais, an independent lawyer appointed to advance the interests of the aboriginal community, who told Oppal Tuesday morning that the hearings have been too heavily focused on police and not on the poor native women who overwhelmingly accounted for Pickton's victims.

That prompted the First Nations Summit, which represents many First Nations and tribal councils in British Columbia, to formally withdraw from the inquiry.

Oppal insisted he was committed to hearing the stories of the First Nations community and how aboriginals were treated by Vancouver police and the RCMP as they investigated Pickton and his involvement in the disappearance of Vancouver sex workers.

Still, Oppal argued it wasn't his role to delve into the centuries of abuse, poverty and neglect faced by Canada's aboriginals.

"The issues that you raise about poverty and colonization, those are all very valid concerns," Oppal said after Gervais explained her departure.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

'Valid concerns'

"The issues that you raise about poverty and colonization, those are all very valid concerns.... Unfortunately, the focus of our commission of inquiry, contrary to the wishes of many people in the province, is not to get into those issues."

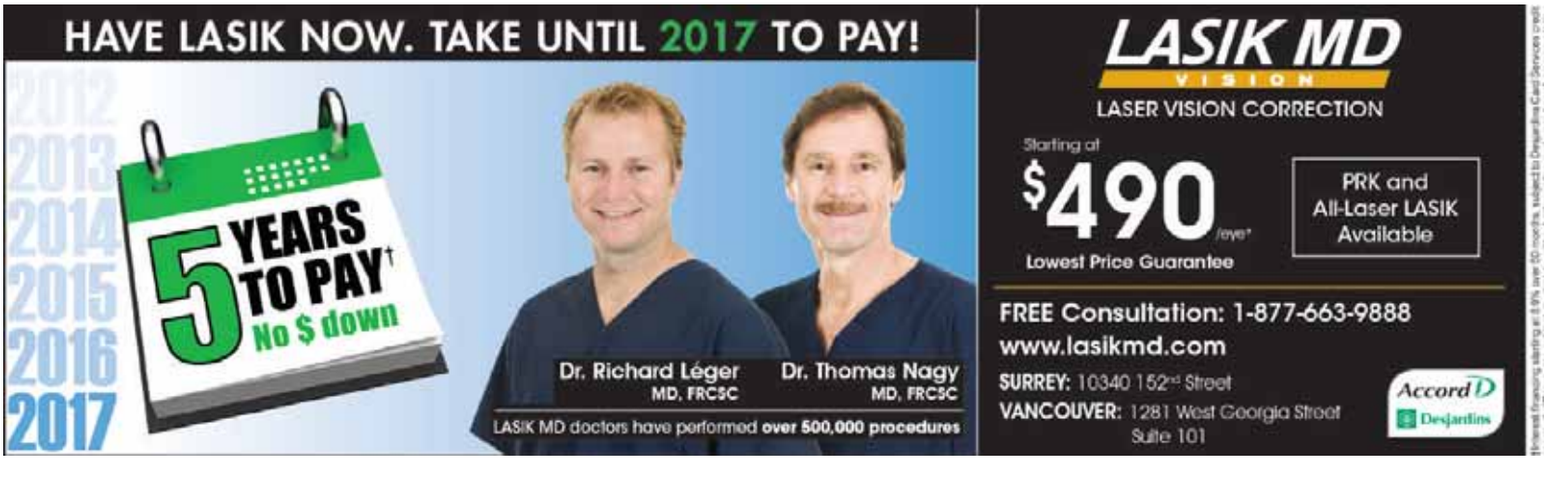
Commissioner Wally Oppal

1 NEWS

On the web

Harry runs

Prince Harry bolts forth in a race with the world's fastest runner in Jamaica on Tuesday. Watch the "race" at metronews.ca/video.



Hero dog returns home after being shot

Home invasion. Story prompts nearly $18,000 in donations

GRAHAM TEMPLETON
vancouver@metronews.ca

Though he spent his recovery surrounded by his favourite toys and blankets, Rumble will no doubt appreciate the chance to sleep in his own bed for the first time since he was shot while trying to protect his home during a break-in last weekend.

The four-year-old American Staffordshire terrier suffered a shattered humerus bone and numerous other injuries, but emergency surgery was able to save both his life and leg.

Dr. Michael King, who performed the three-hour surgery that saved Rumble's life, is optimistic about his chances of a full recovery.

Recovery

"We've given the dog the opportunity to heal in the coming months.... It's really up to him now."
Dr. Michael King, who performed the three-hour surgery

"We've given the dog the opportunity to heal in the coming months," he said. "It's really up to him now."

Following his brush with death, Rumble's story prompted a flurry of donations to Canada West Veterinary Specialists to pay for his medical expenses.

As of Tuesday, donations amounted to almost $18,000. Canada West said that this amount was sufficient to cover the dog's care, and asked for an end to the generous gifts.

Rumble, seen recovering at Canada West Veterinary Specialists on Sunday, returned to his home Tuesday. GRAHAM TEMPLETON/METRO FILE

Unsolved crime. Parents plead for help three years after son's murder

For John and Silvana Dodd, a parent's worst nightmare came true when they had to remove their son from life support three years ago Tuesday.

Steven Dodd was shot dead while at a "crack shack" near 130th Street and 108th Avenue in Surrey, police said. His parents made the decision to take their 27-year-old son off life support a week later.

"Losing Steven like this has shattered our family unit," his parents, John and Silvana, said in a statement on the anniversary. "Not a day goes by that we don't think of him and miss him so much."

They said their son wasn't a gang member or a drug dealer but was a "drug addict and was in a fragile mental state."

"Steven was sexually assaulted when he was 13 and … he finally told his family about the assault when he was 24," the statement says. "The assailant introduced him to the world of drugs. His drug use escalated and got out of control. This was how he managed and dealt with the abuse he suffered as a young boy."

Dodd's parents are appealing to anyone who may have information to come forward.

Steven Dodd COURTESY OF RCMP

"We know there were over a dozen people inside the crack shack at the time of Steven's murder, many of them struggling with addiction themselves," said RCMP Sgt. Jennifer Pound. "(They) may have made significant life changes and are … in a better position, physically and mentally, to come forward with information."

John Dodd has just been diagnosed with terminal cancer and has only weeks to live, while his wife has undergone surgery for a number of health problems since their son's death in 2009.

"We are asking that you do the right thing, make the right choice and come forward," the family's statement says. "We never gave up on him and we ask that you help us stay true to that." PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

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Crime

Teen charged with making threats at New West school

A 14-year-old boy has been charged with making threats after an incident at a New Westminster high school.

Police say an emergency-response team was sent to New Westminster Senior Secondary last Friday after a call came in about a student who may have had a gun.

An investigation identified the 14-year-old suspect, who has been charged with three counts of uttering threats and is expected to be released into the care of his parents. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dispute resolution

Province brings SPCA to heel with legislation

The B.C. government has brought in legislation to shine a brighter light on the SPCA and give animal owners a new way to appeal the actions of the society.

Under the bill, instead of going to court, people can appeal an SPCA animal seizure to an independent tribunal operated by the B.C. Farm Industry Review Board. Agriculture Minister Don McRae says the change will provide a quicker and more cost-effective dispute-resolution process.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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5,000 union members rally outside legislature

Labour. Leaders say demonstrations represent a growing anger within the province's union movement

British Columbia's government shrugged off the presence of about 5,000 chanting union members Tuesday, saying support for striking teachers was an opportunity to blow off steam while labour leaders sounded a warning of future protests.

The public-sector workers amassed on the legislature's front lawn on the second day of a three-day teachers' strike to protest proposed legislation aimed at ending a contract dispute that's been simmering since last year.

Labour leaders said the government has angered the province's union movement with the introduction of Bill 22, which seeks to impose a six-month cooling-off period and appoint a mediator with a strict mandate to not grant a wage increase under the province's policy of no pay hikes for public-sector workers.

Teachers are demanding a 15 per cent wage increase over three years, but the government has said several unions have already settled their contracts in keeping with current guidelines.

Premier Christy Clark said the protest does nothing to change the Liberal government's direction, and the 40,000 teachers' three-day walkout only harms students.

"The legislation is going to pass," she said. "I'm not sure what their purpose is in closing down schools. The outcome of this is inevitable. All it's going to do is hurt kids."

Clark said if it weren't for the Opposition New Democrats' protracted debate of Bill 22, the government would be able to pass the legislation in three hours and have teachers back in their classrooms.

Education Minister George Abbott said the current pace of the legislation suggests it could be law sometime next week. He said he believes teachers will return to work on Thursday, but if that doesn't happen the government is prepared to speed up the legislation.

Many in the rally carried banners reading "$1 Billion for Smart Meters, $0 for Smart Kids," and "Bill 22: Education Destruction Act" and "Kill Bill 22."

Jim Sinclair from the B.C. Federation of Labour told the crowd that the massive show of support was the first round in what he expects will be a series of battles with the Liberal government as public-sector contracts expire.

"This is an attack on all of us," he said. "And it's going to come again and again. We will reject Bill 22 and we will fight and fight until we defeat Bill 22."

B.C. Teachers' Federation (BCTF) president Susan Lambert said Bill 22 is "a brutal piece of legislation" that seeks to impose fines of $20 million a day on the union.

Illegal strike action after Bill 22 is approved would net the BCTF $1.3 million a day in fines, $2,500 for its officials and up to $475 for individual teachers.

"Bill 22 is tangible evidence of the government's arrogance," she told the crowd. "We've only just begun. They need to know that the teachers of British Columbia will defend public education."

Opposition NDP Leader Adrian Dix told the protesters he is "pro-teacher" and accused the Liberals of taking a confrontational approach to the contract dispute.

"I ask you to join us today and in the future to fight for public education," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

B.C. teachers gather on the grounds of the legislature during a rally in Victoria, Tuesday. CHAD HIPOLITO/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quotable

"Today we say to the government, we've had enough."

Jim Sinclair, B.C. Federation of Labour

Reaction

Pickets illegal: Minister

British Columbia's finance minister sought an injunction against striking teachers for mounting what he says are illegal picket lines outside government buildings in Victoria.

"We will be seeking penalties at the Labour Relations Board," Falcon said, adding he understands teachers want to "blow off some steam" and respects their right to protest.

The board ruled Tuesday afternoon that a hearing was no longer required because the picket lines had stopped, but that one would be scheduled if the teachers' union resumed such action.

Workers arriving at government buildings for work Tuesday morning were handed leaflets saying they have the right under their collective agreements to not cross a picket line.

The leaflets stated it's important for all workers to stand together and support teachers in opposing Bill 22, the government's cooling-off contract legislation currently being debated in the legislature.

The leaflets also advise union workers who refuse to cross the picket lines to report to a local conference centre to register for strike pay.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Teachers may extend strike action

The leader of the teachers' union has refused to rule out possible illegal strike as their labour dispute drags on.

Despite the fact the Labour Relations Board (LRB) only gave the B.C. Teachers' Federation (BCTF) a three-day window to walk out of public schools across the province — and once next week — teachers may not be finished.

Speaking to media after meeting teachers outside North Burnaby Secondary School on Tuesday, BCTF president Susan Lambert refused to rule out continued — and illegal — strike action.

"I'm keeping my options open as to what happens on Thursday," Lambert said. "I know there will be resistance to the continued passing of legislation..... What form that will take will be up to the members."

For now, Lambert said teachers are adhering to the LRB order.

"Our members are rightly upset. Whatever happens on Thursday will be up to the membership, but right now it's a legal strike," she said.

Thousands of teachers and supporters marched on the legislature in Victoria on Tuesday, and another similar rally is planned for Vancouver Wednesday.

Music teacher Janet Pritchard, from Burnaby's Westridge elementary, said she's noticed a "divided" reaction to the strike from the general public.

Although parents have expressed complete support for Pritchard, she feels that many people are largely unaware of the issues and have let misconceptions form their opinion.

"I don't want to say we don't deserve a raise, but I think it's really unfortunate when that becomes the focus of discussion," Pritchard said. "I heard one person on the radio say, 'If they really care about the issues, why don't (teachers) take a pay cut?' We did that 10 years ago to get a cap on class sizes and support for special-needs students, and that's all been taken away. People have forgotten that."

The legislature is currently debating Bill 22, which would see the current teacher contract extended for six months and bring in a government-selected mediator in an effort to salvage negotiations, which have been in a stalemate for over a year.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

BCTF president Susan Lambert arrives to greet teachers outside North Burnaby Secondary School Tuesday as a three-day strike continues. MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

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Arrested hacker betrays comrades

FBI Informant. Legendary hacker led to arrests of five people in Europe and the U.S., preventing more than 300 attacks

The shadowy underworld of Internet hackers was rocked by news Tuesday that one of the world's most-wanted and most-feared computer vandals has been an FBI informant for months and helped authorities build a case against five alleged comrades.

The FBI said it captured the hacker known as "Sabu" last June, and he turned out to be Hector Xavier Monsegur, 28, a self-taught, unemployed computer programmer with no college education, living on welfare in public housing in New York.

His exploits made him a hero to some in cyberspace until he made a rookie mistake — he posted something online without cloaking his IP address, or computer identity — and someone tipped off the FBI.

Also charged with conspiracy to commit computer hacking were Ryan Ackroyd, 23, of Doncaster, England; Jake Davis, 29, of Lerwick, Scotland; Darren Martyn, 25, of Galway, Ireland; Donncha O'Cearrbhail, 19, of Birr, Ireland; and Jeremy Hammond, 27, of Chicago. The Europeans were previously arrested in separate hacking cases, though two of them were re-arrested on Tuesday.

Law enforcement officials said it marked the first time core members of the loosely organized worldwide hacking group Anonymous have been identified and charged in the U.S.

Investigators said Monsegur and the other defendants were all associated with the group, and some were also part of the elite spinoff organization that Monsegur formed last May, Lulz Security.

Monsegur and the other defendants were accused in court papers of hacking into corporations and government agencies around the world, including the U.S. Senate, filching confidential information, defacing websites and temporarily putting victims out of business. Authorities said their crimes affected more than one million people.

Prosecutors said that among other things the hackers, with Monsegur as their ringleader, disrupted websites belonging to Visa, Mastercard and Paypal in 2010 and 2011 because the companies refused to accept donations to WikiLeaks, the organization that spilled a trove of U.S. military and diplomatic secrets.

Also, prosecutors said, Monsegur and the others attacked a PBS website last May and planted a false story that slain rapper Tupac Shakur was alive in New Zealand.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trusted insider

"(Sabu) was an admired Anon.... People came to him with information."

Barrett Brown, Journalist
Became closely associated with hacking group Anonymous

Accused of threatening school

Ryan Ringuette reacts during his arraignment in Attleboro, Mass., District Court Tuesday. Ringuette, 20, and Natick Sands, 18, faced threat charges after an alleged Facebook discussion about how to attack Attleboro High School. Both are former students. MIKE GEORGE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hate crime

Gay Chile attack sparks outrage

A brutal attack on a gay Chilean man drew strong condemnation from political leaders and entertainer Ricky Martin on Tuesday.

Twenty-four-year-old Daniel Zamudio had been put in an induced coma while being treated for severe head trauma and a broken right leg suffered in Saturday's beating. Minister Rodrigo Hinzpeter recently said Chile should consider enacting a hate-crime law to deal with such attacks.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sex crime

Ancient cases get closure

A New Brunswick man has been sentenced to five years in prison for decades-old sex crimes. John Joseph Allain pleaded guilty in January to having sex with a girl under the age of 14 and four counts of sexual assault against girls from 1960 to 1982.

The 69-year-old will be added to the sex-offender registry. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Orlando Air + 7 Nights from $549◊
+ taxes & fees $132
INCLUDES central accom with free transportation to major attractions. Price per person based on family of 4. **BOOK** this package based on double occupancy from $598.

Maui Air + 7 Nights from $749◊
+ taxes & fees $149
INCLUDES 1-bedroom condo style accom in Kihei. Price per person based on family of 4. **BOOK** package based on double occupancy from $1049.

Las Vegas

Las Vegas Air + 3 Nights
from $189*
+ taxes & fees $51
INCLUDES airfare from Bellingham and accom on the Strip.

Las Vegas Air + 3 Nights from $239
+ taxes & fees $118
INCLUDES accom on the Strip. **UPGRADE** to 4.5-star accom from $14 per night. **ADD** Vegas Passport Ultimate Club Hopping pass from $130.

Las Vegas
Air + 3 Nights 3-Night Cruise from $557
+ taxes & fees $95
INCLUDES 3-night Pacific Coastal cruise sailing from Los Angeles to Vancouver, airfare to Las Vegas, 3 nights accom on the Las Vegas Strip and return airfare to Vancouver. **UPGRADE** to oceanview stateroom and 4.5-star Vegas accom from $23 per night.

Europe

Barcelona Air + 7 Nights from $1519
+ taxes & fees $541
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USA

Honolulu Air + 7 Nights
from $679
+ taxes & fees $152
INCLUDES central accom near Waikiki Beach.
ADD Paradise Cove Orchid Luau package from $126.

Phoenix Air + 3 Nights from $589
+ taxes & fees $104
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Miami Air + 7 Nights from $979
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Vacations

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+ taxes & fees $409
INCLUDES accom on the Chao Praya River with access to skytrain and ferry services. **BONUS** daily breakfast included. **UPGRADE** to 4-star accom from $10 per night. **ADD** Floating Markets tour from $35.

Australia Long Stay
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+ taxes & fees USD $79
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Mediterranean
7-Night Cruise from $429
+ taxes & fees $112
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Hawaii 7-Night Cruise from USD $949
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Bradley Williams, 3, looks on as his dad votes during Super Tuesday.
VINO WONG/THE ATLANTA JOURNAL & CONSTITUTION/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Santorum gives Romney run for money

GOP. Rivals slug it out in 10-state race that will help decide the Republican party's presidential candidate

Romney on Iran:

"The president speaks of common interests. Let me be very clear about this: We do not have common interests with a terrorist regime."
Mitt Romney, GOP presidential hopeful

Mitt Romney forged another painful path to victory on Tuesday, winning a handful of states on so-called Super Tuesday but only narrowly wresting the delegate-rich crown jewel of Ohio from Rick Santorum, his closest rival for the Republican presidential nomination.

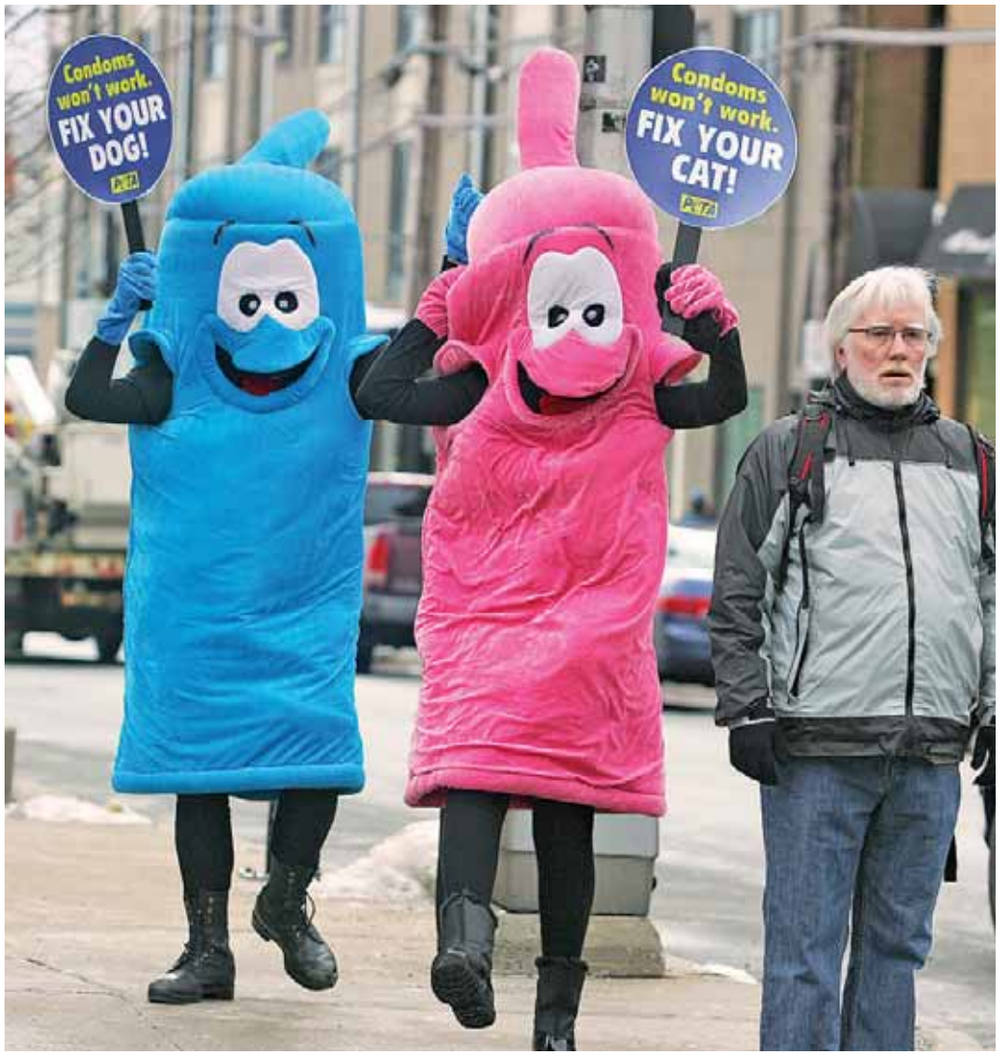
On the biggest single day in the rollercoaster ride that is the Republican presidential race, Romney won 38 per cent of the vote in Ohio in early, unofficial results, while Santorum was right behind him at 37 per cent.

Romney crushed the competition in Massachusetts, where he served as governor for four years, and also handily won Virginia, Vermont and Idaho.

Santorum, meantime, won in Tennessee and Oklahoma, where his stances on hot-button social issues play well with Christian evangelical voters, and in North Dakota, a state in the midst of an oil boom.

But it wasn't a terribly super Tuesday for Romney thanks to the death match for the biggest political prize of the night — blue-collar Ohio, a crucial swing state.

Santorum bested Romney in early results, but the Mormon millionaire pulled away in the state's urban areas, eking out a win on a day he'd hoped would catapult him out of reach of his opponents. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**



PETA lovers take neutering campaign to the next level

PETA campaigners dressed up as giant condoms encourage Haligonians along Spring Garden Road to spay or neuter their pets on Tuesday afternoon. PETA members from Ottawa are touring cities in Atlantic Canada to spread their message.
RYAN TAPLIN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Trial. Slain girl's last day revealed to jury

On the last day of Victoria Stafford's life, the "lovely little girl" used a computer to research plants, got her tights wet by jumping in puddles and had a time-out for goofing around, her teacher testified Tuesday.

The Grade 3 student also asked for permission to run back to her classroom at the end of the day to retrieve a pair of earrings she had forgotten, Jennifer Griffin Murrell told a London, Ont., court.

Tori went to get them and left about one minute after the bell, behind her classmates.

Because the girl wasn't wearing the butterfly earrings, Griffin Murrell asked her if she had found them, and Tori said she had.

"I said, 'OK, hun, we'll see you tomorrow,'" Griffin Murrell told court.

She never saw Tori again.

The eight-year-old vanished shortly after leaving school that day — April 8, 2009.

Three months later, her partially clothed remains were found in garbage bags and under rocks in a field more than 100 kilometres from her Woodstock, Ont., home.

The Crown alleges Michael Rafferty and Terri-Lynne McClintic, who has already pleaded guilty to first-degree murder, snatched Tori outside her school and, within hours, sexually assaulted and killed her.

Rafferty is now on trial, having pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder, sexual assault causing bodily harm and kidnapping.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Trains. Canadians should fear rail safety: Board

The federal Transportation Safety Board says Canadians have reason to fear rail security given the troubling similarities between a recent fatal train accident in Ontario and a derailment two years ago in Quebec.

Board officials made the observation during a news conference Tuesday in Quebec City, while releasing a report into a crash in February 2010 that injured seven people in St-Charles-de-Bellechasse.

The report cited a variety of factors behind that crash, including: Poor visibility because of snow; poor technology that leaves open the possibility of human error; and improper sharing of medical data that could reveal things like sleep disorders.

It said all those factors contributed to the 2010 accident where the VIA passenger train burst into a siding track at excessive speed.

Almost two years later to the day, there were related factors behind the VIA derailment that killed three crew members in Burlington, Ont., on Feb. 26, 2012, board members said.

"The scenario is similar," TSB official Ed Belkaloul told reporters.

"There's obviously room for improvement. It's clear: When it comes to high-speed trains and passenger trains, the measures are insufficient, as this accident illustrates."

The TSB says the Canadian rail system relies too heavily on human activity and has been too slow to adopt automated systems, like in the United States.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Law & order

Opposition slams rejection of changes for bill

Opposition parties chastised the government Tuesday for rejecting a raft of proposed amendments to a sweeping federal justice bill they see as a big backward step.

The omnibus bill has returned to the House of Commons from the Senate for final debate on some changes — but only ones endorsed by the governing Conservatives.

They would allow victims of terrorism to sue states that support political violence.

In addition, it would end house arrest for many crimes and force people to wait longer for a criminal pardon.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Anonymous

Hacker group breached MP's privacy: Speaker

House of Commons Speaker Andrew Scheer has ruled Public Safety Minister Vic Toews' parliamentary privileges were breached by videos posted online by the group Anonymous, clearing the way for the hackers to be hauled before MPs.

"These videos contained various allegations about the minister's private life, and made specific and disturbing threats," Scheer said.

The YouTube video shows a headless man in a black suit under a red maple leaf and laurels as a computer-generated voice demands Toews quit and calls for the online-surveillance bill to be scrapped. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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[1] bmo.com ranked #1 among banks in an interactive research study conducted among 1,750 prospective online banking customers as they interacted with the websites of seven leading Canadian financial institutions.
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Political transition

Obama reiterates Afghanistan plan

President Barack Obama says the furor in Afghanistan over the accidental burning of Qur'ans underscores the need for the U.S. to transition out of the war there.

Obama emphasized that the U.S. still plans to end its combat role in Afghanistan by the end of 2014. The drawdown will be a central topic of discussion at the NATO meetings in Chicago in May. He says the recent accidental burning of Muslim Qur'ans by U.S. forces and the protests that followed underscore the challenges in Afghanistan and why the U.S. is reducing its combat role there.

Thirty people died in the Qur'an protests, including six American troops.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Strained relations

- **Deaths.** Thirty people died in the Qur'an protests.
- **Deadline.** The U.S. plans to end its combat role by 2014.

Court order

More may go to trial over suicide

U.S. military investigators have recommended that four more American troops be court-martialed in connection with the suicide of Pvt. Danny Chen, 19, who shot himself after what investigators say were weeks of racial slurs, humiliation and physical abuse by his colleagues.

Chen had only been in Afghanistan for two months when he committed suicide at a remote base in the South. So far, U.S. military investigators have recommended that seven of the eight soldiers be court-martialed.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This undated photo shows Pvt. Danny Chen, who committed suicide Oct. 3, 2011, in Kandahar.

Karzai backs strict guidelines for women

Political Move. President's decision is seen as part of his outreach to insurgents like the Taliban.

Afghanistan's president on Tuesday endorsed a "code of conduct" issued by an influential council of clerics that activists say represents a giant step backward for women's rights in the country.

President Hamid Karzai's remarks backing the Ulema Council's document, which allows husbands to beat wives under certain circumstances and encourages segregation of the sexes, is seen as part of his outreach to insurgents like the Taliban.

Both the U.S. and Karzai hope that the Taliban can be brought into negotiations to end the country's decade-long war.

But activists say they're worried that gains made by women since 2001 may be lost in the process.

When the Taliban ruled Afghanistan prior to the 2001 U.S. invasion, girls were banned from going to school and women had to wear burqas that covered them from head to toe. Women were not allowed to leave their homes without a male relative as an escort.

The "code of conduct" issued Friday as part of a longer statement on national political issues is cast as a set of guidelines that religious women should obey voluntarily, but activists are concerned it will herald a reversal of the trend in expanding women's rights.

Among the rules: Women should not travel without a male guardian and women should not mingle with strange men in places like schools, markets or offices. Beating one's wife is prohibited only if there is no "sharia-compliant reason," it said, referring to the principles of Islamic law.

Asked about the code of conduct at a press conference in the capital, Karzai said it was in line with Islamic law and was written in consultation with Afghan women's groups.

He did not name the groups that were consulted.

"The clerics' council of Afghanistan did not put any limitations on women," Karzai said, adding: "It is the sharia law of all Muslims and all Afghans."

Karzai's public backing of the council's guidelines may be intended to make his own government more palatable to the Taliban, or he may simply be trying to keep on the good side of the Ulema Council, who could be valuable intermediaries in speaking to the insurgents.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Women's Rights

Karzai shifting positions: Report

Hadi Marifat of the Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization, which surveyed 5,000 Afghan women for a recent report on the state of women's rights in Afghanistan, argued that the statements show Karzai is shifting more toward the strictest interpretations of Shariah law.

"In the post-Taliban Afghanistan, the guiding principle of President Karzai regarding women's rights has been attracting funding from the international community on one hand, balanced against the need to get the support of the Ulema Council and other traditionalists on the other," Marifat said.

"The concerning thing is that now this balance is shifting toward the conservative element, and that was obvious in his statement."

An Afghan woman comforts her crying eight-month-old daughter while sitting by her home in a poor neighborhood in Kabul. MUHAMMED MUHEISEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Shaky Negotiations. U.S. and Afghanistan struggle to find common ground

Negotiations over a long-term U.S. military presence in Afghanistan have bogged down over issues of detainees, night raids and quarrels within the Afghan president's inner circle, throwing the whole deal into question.

The arrangement would formalize a U.S. role after NATO's planned pullout in 2014. The deadlock reflects growing hostility on the part of the Afghan leadership and increasing exasperation in Washington.

Discussions about the agreement continued Monday, though trust has been eroded in recent days by anti-American protests over Qur'an burnings at a U.S. base, a rising number of U.S. troops gunned down by Afghan security forces and election-year demands to bring the troops home.

Karzai met Monday evening with U.S. Ambassador Ryan Crocker, but a Karzai spokesman did not return phone calls requesting details about their talks.

U.S. Embassy spokesman Gavin Sundwall said that despite the dragging negotiations, the U.S. was committed to a strategic partnership with the Afghan people. However, he also said it was more important to get the right agreement than to get an agreement.

The pact is expected to provide for several thousand U.S. troops to stay and train Afghan forces and help with counter-terrorism operations. It was supposed to be completed before the next NATO summit in May. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

Afghan President Hamid Karzai, right, talks to Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski in Kabul yesterday. ANJA NIEDRINGHAUS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nunavut fire: ‘It’s not a stretch to say there’s gross negligence’

Indictment. Former fire marshal says government should have known apartment block didn’t meet building codes

Fire crews on the scene of Iqaluit fire on the frigid Arctic night of Feb. 27. SARAH ROGERS, NUNATSIAQ NEWS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nunavut’s former fire marshal says the territorial government should have known an apartment block that was the scene of a fatal blaze didn’t meet modern building codes.

Tony Noakes, who lost his job in May 2010 after he voiced related concerns, says similar problems exist throughout the territory.

“I’m concerned government hasn’t implemented any recommendations I put forward in my report in 2009,” Noakes, who now lives in Lyndhurst, Ont., said Tuesday.

“Maybe something could have been done to save these people.

“It’s not a far stretch to say there’s gross negligence here.”

At least two people died when a 22-unit block in Iqaluit’s White Row apartments went up in flames on the frigid night of Feb. 27.

The building was being used as a residence for Nunavut Arctic College and all the tenants but one were students or their families.

Some 83 people were forced outside in -50 C temperatures and lost everything in the fire.

Reports have said the two who died were adult children of an Arctic College student.

Remains of one person were found Friday and police reported Monday that a second set of remains had been found.

An RCMP forensic team was on the site.

Landlord Nunastar Properties said repairs were made and inspected in the 200 block after a Jan. 23, 2000, inspection report.

Spokesperson Kristin Scott said Nunastar buildings get regular fire inspections.

“All of our buildings have received fire-safety-related upgrades over the years and are subject to annual inspections of fire safety equipment,” she said. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Problems

- **Report.** Noakes pointed to a fire inspection dated Jan. 23, 2000, that outlined a series of structural problems with White Row’s 200 block.
- **Location.** The White Row units that burned were part of the 300 block, not the 200 block. But Noakes says all parts of the complex would have had the same problems.

Sex. Suburban mom or madam — she’s jailed on a $2-million bond

Is Anna Gristina a mom — or a madam?

Prosecutors say she’s an arrogant, multimillion-dollar head of a prostitution ring.

They say she has boasted of ties to law enforcement and has stashed cash to flee if authorities close in on her.

But Gristina’s advocates portrayed her Tuesday as a dedicated suburban mom, animal rescuer and former real estate broker who was working on building an online dating service.

The reality is Gristina is jailed on a seven-figure bail on a single charge of promoting prostitution.

“A caring mother of four has been slapped with a $2-million bond” one of her lawyers, Peter Gleason, said after a New York judge refused Tuesday to lower the bail.

Gristina has pleaded not guilty. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Millionaire?

- Prosecutors say Gristina was heard during a five-year investigation saying she’d made millions of dollars over about 15 years of arranging trysts.

California

Cannon blast kills woman

A 33-year-old woman died Tuesday after a homemade cannon blew a projectile into a mobile home in a remote California community. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Moldova

Pedophiles face chemical penalty

Foreigners convicted of sexually abusing children in Moldova will be chemically castrated, according to new legislation approved Tuesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The SXC Lynx spaceship carries two people — the pilot-astronaut and a passenger. ALEX STOKES/FOR METRO

Historic Metro contest will send reader into space

One of our readers will reach the highest of heights — Metro is the first newspaper to send a contest winner to space.

The Metro Race for Space 2012 competition is global and the prize is the stuff dreams are made of.

Ours is the first generation to have the opportunity to explore space as a tourist and a Metro reader will be one of the first to do it.

What will it be like?

At 60,000 metres the curvature of the Earth can be seen clearly, surrounded by the black void of outer space.

To prepare for the weightlessness, the contest winner will be required to undergo two to four days of training in the Netherlands.

The SXC Lynx takes off from Curaçao in the Caribbean for a one-hour flight.

Participants are required to complete a quiz and submit an inspiring proposal.

In addition to the global winner, a local winner will receive a secondary prize.

The local winner will be selected based on the highest number of Facebook “likes.”

The global winner — the person who gets to go into space — will be selected by a global jury. The winner must be 18 years old by liftoff in 2014. METRO

Your chance to soar

The Metro Race for Space contest is ground-breaking.

- Enter the contest at metroinspace.com.
- Information on the SXC Lynx spacecraft is at spacexc.com.
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Ponzi scheme. RBC settlement to reimburse half of victims' losses

Scores of people defrauded in a high-profile Quebec pyramid scheme will be reimbursed for roughly half of what they lost, thanks to an out-of-court settlement announced Tuesday.

Victims of financial fraudster Earl Jones reached the $17-million settlement in their class-action lawsuit with the Royal Bank of Canada, the bank said.

The sum represents just under half the amount of $40 million that victims had been seeking in their lawsuit.

"(This) is the result of many months of discussion between RBC and the class-plaintiffs and seeks to address some of the financial difficulties the class-plaintiffs faced as a result of entrusting Mr. Jones with their financial affairs," a statement said.

The bank added that the proposed settlement amount will not be final until the court-approval process is completed and is not material to RBC earnings.

Jones ran a Ponzi scheme in which many of his former clients were friends or family and people he met through word-of-mouth. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Sweet treats go high-tech

A new 24-hour cupcake "ATM," an automatic machine that will be continuously restocked to dispense fresh cupcakes, is tested at Sprinkles Cupcakes in Beverly Hills, Calif., on Monday. The machine features a touchscreen and a robotic arm that pulls the right flavoured cupcake from a wall of single-serving boxes inside the store. The bakery is launching the first high-tech vending machine Tuesday, with three more in the works for New York City by the summer. DAMIAN DOVARGANES/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Moment

DOLLAR
$99.94 US
(-0.64¢)

TSX
12,298.63 (-225.31)

OIL
$104.70 US (-$2.02)

GOLD
$1,672.10 US (-$31.80)

Natural gas: $2.36 US (no change)
Dow Jones: 12,759.15 (-203.66)

Debt deal

Greek banks agree to bond-swap deal

Greece's government on Tuesday said the country's six major banks have agreed to participate in a bond-swap deal, a move likely to relieve financial authorities as a deadline looms. The deal aims at cutting more than $139 billion off the country's debt. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Workers' win

Singapore maids to get day off

Maids in Singapore will soon get something that many people around the world take for granted: a day off. Starting next year, maids must receive one day off a week or compensation to work that day, Manpower Minister Tan Chuan-Jin told Parliament. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Pipeline proposal

New Keystone route in works

A new route for the controversial Keystone XL oil pipeline through Nebraska should be ready within weeks with "relatively modest" changes, TransCanada executive Alex Pourbaix told an energy conference in Houston on Tuesday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Financial fraud

Tycoon convicted in Ponzi scheme

Texas tycoon R. Allen Stanford, whose financial empire once spanned the Americas, was convicted Tuesday on all but one of the 14 counts he faced for allegedly bilking investors out of more than $7 billion in a massive Ponzi scheme he operated for 20 years. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Fading French village goes on the auction block

MICHELLE CASTILLO
vancouver@metronews.ca

If you've ever dreamed of having your own private French village, here's your chance: Courbefy is on sale, starting at $440,000.

And, yes, in case you were wondering, Courbefy comes with more than a dozen buildings, its own horse stable, tennis court, swimming pool and 12th-century chapel. It even has three "miraculous springs," which supposedly contains waters with healing powers.

After the property was put up for auction and no one bid the $400,000 asking price, the village went back into the hands of bank Credit Agricole.

Why is this little piece of rural paradise about 450 kilometres from Paris on sale?

The mayor of neighbouring Saint Nicholas Courbefy told The Associate Press that the village, which goes back at least to the Gallo-Roman times, was abandoned in 2008 or 2009. It was used as a luxury hotel and restaurant before the owners gave up on it and stopped paying the mortgage. Local residents told the Telegraph that the area was occupied by "thieves, drunks and squatters."

But, in its heyday, Courbefy was the site of the chateau of mother of King Henry IV's mother, Jeanne d'Albret.

Now, people as far away as Qatar are expressing interest in the property. The bank is asking for a deposit of 10 percent higher than the asking price from potential buyers to be considered. A new auction date will be set in the future.

The people who live in the neighbouring area are excited about the prospect of a new owner for Courbefy.

They hope that whoever buys the property will let the village experience its glory days once again, similar to the rebirth other privately owned villages and islands have experienced in the hands of new owners.

"Some people call it social engineering," John Rous, whose family owns a British village, told The Guardian. "I prefer to think of it as keeping the village alive."

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JUST SAYIN'
Paul Sullivan
metronews.ca/justsaying

The next time you feel the urge to buy a lottery ticket, blame Louise White.

She's the little 81-year-old lady from Rhode Island who won $336.4 million after she bought the winning ticket at a Stop & Shop.

And now she has all her money in what she calls the Rainbow Sherbet Trust in honour of the sherbet she bought along with the ticket.

Louise White STEW MILNE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

At first, she couldn't believe her good fortune, at one point turning off her computer and turning it back on again. The numbers were still the same. She kept the winning ticket in her Bible until it was time to claim her prize.

Ain't that cute?

I hate Louise White.

Just when I've finally made a rational decision to stop throwing perfectly good money down the toilet, never to be spent again, someone like Louise White pops up. Even though there's a one-in-175,223,510 chance of winning the Powerball, Louise won it anyway. I mean there's as much chance of Louise winning the Powerball lottery as there is of that rainbow sherbet winning the Powerball lottery.

So, starting today, it's back to throwing good money down the toilet. If you don't play, it don't pay — or something.

Just imagine?

My wife, who never fails to buy a lottery ticket for the 6-49 or Lotto Max, spends the rest of the week figuring out how she's going to spend the money. IMHO, she always gives too much of it away.

My wife, who never fails to buy a lottery ticket for the 6-49 or Lotto Max, spends the rest of the week figuring out how she's going to spend the money. IMHO, she always gives too much of it away. Right off the bat, half goes to "Africa," while the rest goes to pay the debts of everyone in her extended family, leaving insufficient funds to keep me in the lifestyle to which I could easily become accustomed.

It never occurs to me, until halfway into the argument, that it's not going to happen anyway and I'm getting all red in the face for nothing, when there are lots of more important things I could get red in the face about.

Still, consider LeRoy and Deborah, Louise's son and daughter-in-law. LeRoy and Deborah didn't even have to fork over two bucks to buy the ticket, and now they're the beneficiaries of Louise's good fortune. I wonder if they ever had the argument. My wife is aware of my vulnerable position. "No money for you," she warns.

Fair warning: The odds of winning the Lotto Max are much better than winning the Powerball. Only one in 85,900,584. More than twice as likely. Of course, the odds of being struck by lightning are only 2.3 million to one. The odds of being hit by an ice-cream delivery truck full of rainbow sherbet are only one in 625.

Which reminds me to look both ways before I cross the street. On my way to the lottery kiosk.

Usain, is this how you do it?

GETTY IMAGES

World's fastest

Strike a pose

KINGSTON, JAMAICA. It's practice makes perfect for Prince Harry as the third-in-line to the British throne tries to copy the signature victory pose of sprint star Usain Bolt at the University of the West Indies track.

Harry, 27, is touring the Caribbean as part of the Diamond Jubilee. **MWN**

A race to the finish

Prince Harry wins

RACE. The prince got off to a false start and was about 50 metres down the track as Bolt lifted his arms in mock disbelief.

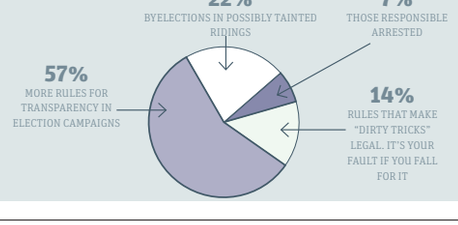
Harry kept on running to cross the finish line. "He cheated," Bolt said. "I said we would have a rematch in London 2012 and Harry said, 'I'm busy.'" **MWN**

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

What do you most want to see come out of the "robocalls" investigation?

Survey says...


22%
BYELECTIONS IN POSSIBLY TAINTED RIDINGS
7%
THOSE RESPONSIBLE ARRESTED
57%
MORE RULES FOR TRANSPARENCY IN ELECTION CAMPAIGNS
14%
RULES THAT MAKE "DIRTY TRICKS" LEGAL. IT'S YOUR FAULT IF YOU FALL FOR IT

Twitter

@grahamclark: Why can't I join Curves if I have curves?

@Dave_Eby: "Given that these hearings were about missing aboriginal women, I didn't think I would need to fight to have their voices heard." – Gervais

@Miss604 On this day in 1948: The "Giant Dipper" original roller coaster at the PNE came down: ow. ly/9uu8A

@tylergreen1040: Less than 2,500 tickets remaining for the #Vancouver #WhitecapsFC home opener against Montreal on Saturday.

@bifnaked: Perhaps #Vancouver would be third. RT@DrDogs247 wooWOOF The U.S. has the highest dog population in the world. France has the second highest.

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Extreme Price Reduction
$30,000

Condo in ORLANDO
1 bed, 2 bath
Extreme Price Reduction
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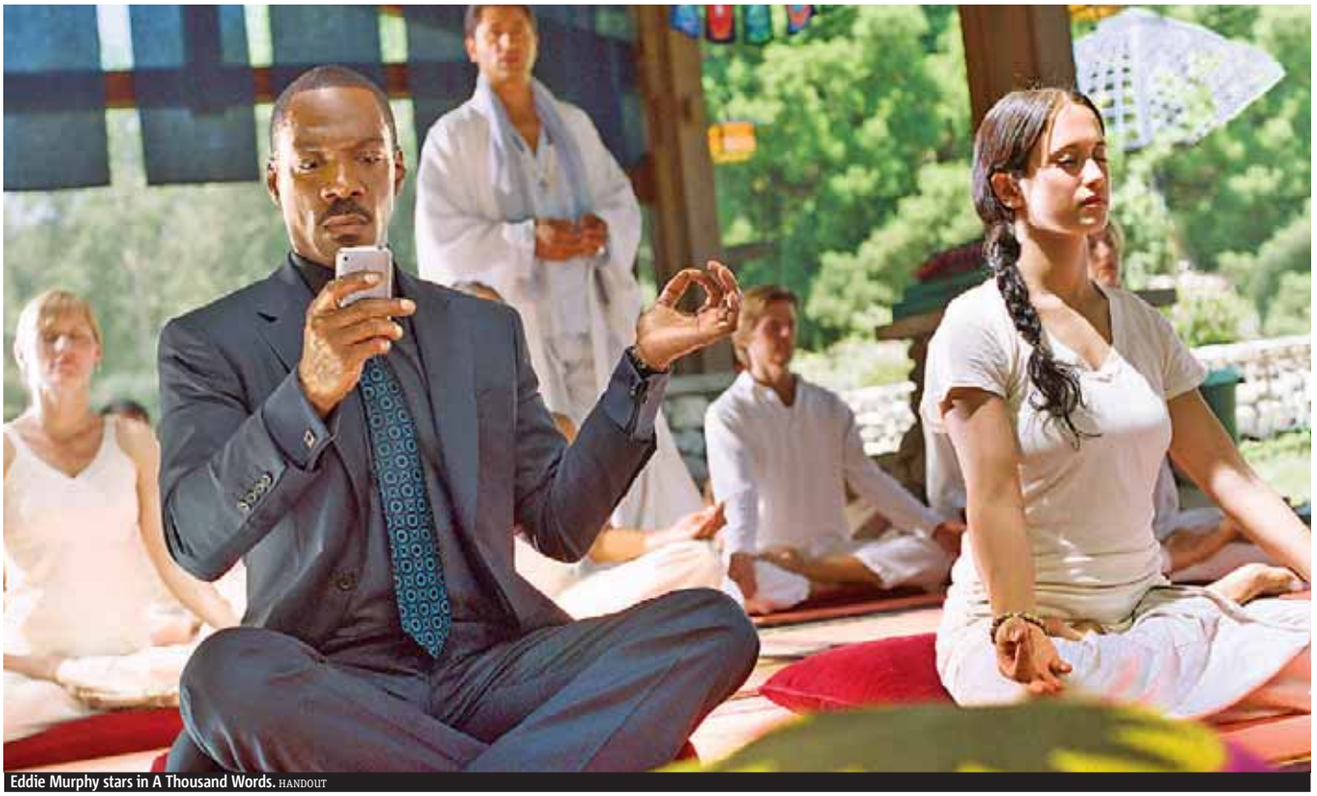

Eddie Murphy stars in A Thousand Words. HANDOUT

Going gaga for gurus

Spiritual humour. Comedy mixed with spirituality can work if done well — or prove toxic for both audiences and critics

IN FOCUS
Richard Crouse
scene@metronews.ca

What do spiritual gurus and comedy have in common? More than you might think.

Deepak Chopra, possibly the world's most famous guru, says, "When your soul responds to the paradox of our existence, to the contradictions of our existence, to the fact that wherever there is joy there is suffering, when your soul recognizes this, it can do nothing except laugh."

In other words, chuckle — it's good for your soul.

These are words to live by, particularly if you are Eddie Murphy in A Thousand Words, opening this weekend. In this comedy, Murphy plays a shady literary agent who cheats a spiritual guru in a business deal. His punishment teaches him the value of every word that comes out of his mouth.

A Thousand Words isn't the first comedy to go gaga for gurus.

In the 1968 counter-culture hit I Love You, Alice B. Toklas!, Peter Sellers plays a 30-something who visits a maharishi for enlightenment. "You will know yourself when you stop trying," he is told. "I'm trying to stop trying," Sellers replies.

A year later came The Guru, a movie that echoed the real-life musical journey of Beatle George Harrison's internship with Ravi Shankar. Michael York starred as a famous British rock 'n' roller who travels from London to Bombay to study sitar at the feet of guru Ustad Zafar Khan.

Director James Ivory (who along with producer Ismail Merchant would go on to make Howard's End and The Remains of the Day) called The Guru "the most unseen and mysterious of our movies … Merchant Ivory's version of a '60s trip."

Sharing a title is the 2002 Jimi Mistry film about a young Indian man who moves to New York with dreams of becoming an actor but instead becomes a sex guru who doles out catchphrases such as, "the most powerful sexual organ is your brain."

In The Love Guru, Mike Myers mixed gross-out humour with spiritualism, a combo that proved toxic for both audiences and critics.

Even Mike's own guru agreed it flopped. "Humour mixed with spirituality can work, if it's done well," Deepak Chopra, who has a cameo in the film, said. "But frankly speaking, this was not a good attempt."

So what exactly do gurus and comedy have in common?

Myers says he learned from Chopra that "ha ha" is related to "ah ha," the sound one makes upon the realization of truth." Maybe it's that simple.

Country singer laments friends in low places

An emotional Garth Brooks said his addition to the Country Music Hall of Fame at 50 is probably a little premature when you look at the long list of his influences who haven't yet been inducted.

The Friends in Low Places singer transformed country music, but on Tuesday he was more interested in talking about the singers who transformed him. Brooks spoke during a news conference to announce he will be inducted later this year with singer Connie Smith and keyboard player Hargus "Pig" Robbins.

"You're excited," Brooks said. "You feel very honoured. But at the same time there's this kind of guilt or, I don't know what it is, a kind of embarrassment, so you feel uneasy because I wouldn't be standing here today talking to you if it wasn't for Randy Travis. I wouldn't be standing here talking to you today if it wasn't for Ricky Skaggs, Keith Whitley, Steve Wariner, these guys.

"I think eventually they will get in, but it probably should've been before Garth Brooks came in. That's the whole feeling for the day."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trending

Get ready for iPad 3

Apple is set to unveil its iPad 3 at an invite-only event today. Metro has teamed up with Mike Yawney, the technology specialist with Citytv, to bring you the latest from the event. Visit metronews.ca/apple to follow Yawney as he tweets live from the announcement.

On the Web

Scan this code or visit metronews.ca/apple for more on the iPad 3 launch.

Silent House star Elizabeth Olsen isn't quiet when it comes to horror

Acting scared.
Younger Olsen sister says playing horror movie roles comes naturally to her

NED EHRBAR
scene@metronews.ca

Elizabeth Olsen says that she's a huge fan of the horror genre. HANDOUT

Elizabeth Olsen admits taking the lead in the real-time horror movie Silent House didn't pose too much of a challenge, acting-wise.

"Becoming scared or something like that isn't the hardest thing for me to do," she says. "It's much harder in my mind to do something comedic timing-wise. I find that to be a huge talent."

The ease with which she finds acting scared aside, Olsen is a natural for the horror genre because she's also a huge fan.

"I've been a fan of horror movies since I started watching movies because I was the youngest of four kids, and my brother — who's the oldest in the family — loves scary movies, and I'm very much his sister," she says. "Arachnophobia was one of the very first movies I grew up on — at a very young age — so that was something I loved."

Despite her love of scary movies, Olsen admits she's not the best company for viewing them.

"My friends really don't like seeing movies with me because I am the loudest one in the audience," she says. "I laugh at things that apparently aren't funny to anyone else. And I scream and then laugh after screaming. I'm a very vocal audience member."

Analysis

Getting choosy

After making waves with her debut in the critically acclaimed Martha Marcy May Marlene last year, Olsen has found her profile in the industry skyrocketing. "I did not think that after a year of trying to work I would be in a position where I got to choose things," she says.

That way of thinking most recently drove her to choose writer-director John Krokidas' Kill Your Darlings, the beat generation drama co-starring Daniel Radcliffe, Jack Huston and Ben Foster that begins filming in New York this month.

"It's probably one of the best scripts I've read," she says.

NED EHRBAR

BREAKING NEWS

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Fellow Canadians - a new video series has just recently been released which reveals the 7 costly mistakes that ALL Canadians make when buying U.S. real estate, and a 23 step system that can help you prevent these common mistakes in order to protect your investment.

This video series clearly shows how a typical Canadian loses an average of $30,000 when buying U.S. real estate. The fact of the matter is that the U.S. is a foreign country with an entirely different tax system that the CRA frowns upon – worse yet – with regulations written against foreigners, such as the famous "world estate tax".

Don't dare google "U.S. Real Estate" until you watch and learn the proven methods.

This video series exposes the 7 deadliest mistakes that cost Canadians tens of thousands of dollars. The good news is that each and every one of these mistakes are entirely preventable. In answer to these issues, Canada's only active U.S. real estate expert - Steve Martel - has prepared a free video series entitled "Buying U.S. Real Estate The Proven Way".

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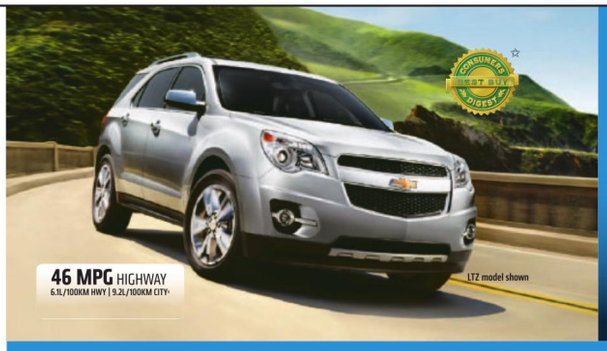

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O.A.R. reaffirm connection to one another with King

Hardship reminds band why they do what they do. Positive vibes and palpable sincerity sprinkled throughout their latest effort

PAT HEALY
scene@metronews.ca

If listeners perceive a previously unheard gravitas beneath the bouncy grooves and anthemic choruses of the new O.A.R. album, that's because while working on King, the band went through dark times.

Singer and guitarist Marc Roberge says that his wife's diagnosis with cancer and her subsequent successful treatment gave new meaning to soul-searching verses he had already been working on.

Not only did the hardship serve as a lyrical litmus test of sorts, but the experience also made him realize how important the band he started with his friends in high school really is to him.

"I went into the album with every intention of writing about somebody who has come to this realization, you know, somebody who has realized that you can't live your life constantly out there searching for something — at some point you've got to just look right around you at everything that's within arm's reach," he says.

"In the middle of the record-making process, when everything started to happen on the home front, it really solidified it — but at the same time it made me realize how full of it I was. It's really good to talk about that — it's kind of cool to put out positive quotes — but until you really have to, it's all just words."

The music on King certainly does put out the positive vibes, and there is a palpable sting of sincerity as Roberge sings lines like, "I know you've got my back," against a reggae rhythm in Fire, and "everything we got is everything we need" in Heaven.

"You have this dream when you're 15 that you want to be on the road," says Roberge.

"Then life goes on, and you're in a band for 15 years, you have kids and all these brothers in the band. It becomes very difficult to balance the world of travel and home. You get tested every single tour, and you really have to love it. … And it turned out, when it got hard, everyone still wanted to get the music out there."

Analysis

Small shows to have a big impact

This upcoming string of shows marks the first headlining dates in NYC since selling out Madison Square Garden in 2009 for O.A.R., whose name stands for Of A Revolution. Instead of playing bigger venues, the members of O.A.R. decided that they wanted to play multiple nights at smaller venues.

"We'll go in there and play almost every song we've ever had," says Roberge. "We're going to try to write songs onstage. It's going to be completely loose. We're going to bring in some special guests. … We really want to connect with our very close fan base."

O.A.R. is finding their legs again on their latest album / GETTY IMAGES

Music review

Bruce Springsteen

Album. Wrecking Ball

Label. Columbia Records

Nearly three decades ago, Bruce Springsteen wrote with sadness about a man showing his young son a hometown ravaged by outside economic forces, a town the family was about to leave. He's not sad now. He's angry, mighty angry. On the new song, Death to My Hometown, he wants to "send the robber barons straight to hell, the greedy thieves who came around and ate the flesh of everything they found, whose crimes have gone unpunished now, who walk the streets as free men now." With economic injustice, Springsteen's powerful new disc has a subject he can sink his teeth into, and he matches it with music that has some of the same clenched fury. This is not an E Street Band record. Steve Van Zandt, Nils Lofgren, Roy Bittan and Garry Tallent are not among the 31 credited musicians. Springsteen sounds creatively energized working with new sounds and with some new people, most notably producer Ron Aniello, guitarist Tom Morello and singer Michelle Moore. The title track is about the tearing down of Giants Stadium, an arena Springsteen made his own over many years yet it provides a line that best sums up the singer's message on this disc: "Hold tight to your anger," he sings. "And don't fall to your fears."

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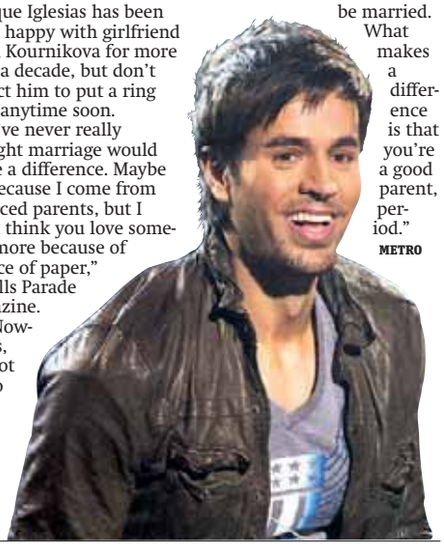
WORKOPOLIS

Enrique's not a big believer in marriage

Enrique Iglesias has been quite happy with girlfriend Anna Kournikova for more than a decade, but don't expect him to put a ring on it anytime soon.

"I've never really thought marriage would make a difference. Maybe it's because I come from divorced parents, but I don't think you love someone more because of a piece of paper," he tells Parade magazine.

"Nowadays, it's not taboo to have kids and not be married. What makes a difference is that you're a good parent, period." METRO



Posh Spice isn't always posh, or so she says

Perennial fashionista Victoria Beckham admits that she's not above slipping into a tracksuit and a pair of UGGs on occasion — but never in public.

"You'll never see me on the street in a tracksuit. I just love fashion too much to wear a tracksuit. The same goes for UGG boots. I only wear them at home," she tells Madame Figaro magazine. METRO

Victoria Beckham

Demi looking stronger and sun-kissed after her vacay, time in rehab

After a stint in rehab in Utah followed by a private Caribbean vacation, Demi Moore is back in Los Angeles, according to TMZ.

The actress was photographed stepping off a private jet looking tan and healthy. Moore had departed from Nassau in the Bahamas and passed through Customs in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., before heading on to California.

This is the first time Moore has been home since shortly after being rushed to the hospital following a drug-related collapse in January. METRO

Demi Moore

Twitter

@ActuallyNPH
That Kirk Cameron is hilarious!

@oliviawilde
Pretty cool to be shooting on the same stage as The Big Sleep. And Space Jam

@diablocody
Just listened to "Come Undone" by Duran Duran in the car. Sexiest thing I had ever heard in junior high.

@SethMacFarlane
I hear babies cry. I watch them grow. They'll learn much more than I'll ever know. And I think to myself: who brought babies to this bar?

Kirk Cameron's former Growing Pains co-stars won't show him that smile

Born-again Christian and former Growing Pains star Kirk Cameron recently told CNN's Piers Morgan that being gay is "unnatural," "detrimental" and "ultimately destructive to so many of the foundations of civilization," and his remarks have earned him a considerable amount of blowback.

Among those criticizing Cameron? His former sitcom co-stars.

Tracy Gold posted to Twitter, "I am a strong supporter of the LGBT Community, and I believe in equal rights for all."

Meanwhile Alan Thicke, who played Cameron and Gold's father on Growing Pains, posted, "I'm getting him some new books. The Old Testament simply can't be expected to explain everything." METRO

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Reality star off the rails

Tila Tequila: Was it an aneurysm, overdose or suicide attempt?

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Was Tila Tequila's recent hospitalization due to a brain aneurysm, a drug overdose or a suicide attempt? Whatever the reason, the former reality star is all kinds of WTF.

Radar Online is saying that a brain aneurysm made her "think irrationally" and ingest "two bottles of unspecified heavy prescription drugs."

"Tila threw up all over her bed after overdosing and felt like she was dying. She was screaming for help, and in desperation, broke her bedroom window and attempted to jump out," a source says.

"Finally, a friend came over after getting a strange text from her and found her convulsing on the bed. He called an ambulance and she was taken to the hospital."

Reports say Tequila was treated at two different hospitals over a week's span, but she's not out of the woods yet.

"She still can't fully speak properly," the source says. "It's sad to think she may have some permanent brain damage." But TMZ.com says all the drama was caused by a suicide attempt and that she'd been trying "kill herself all week."

We've said it once, we'll say it a million times: Mamas, don't let your daughters grow up to be reality TV stars.

Tila Tequila ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

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Palm Springs has a casual vibe not found in Hollywood. GOINGSLO/ FLICKR

The stars are brighter near the Mojave Desert

Palm Springs. The Travellin' Canadian checks out a Hollywood mecca

THE TRAVELLIN' CANADIAN
Darren Parkman
travel@metronews.ca

There's more to Palm Springs than dusty desert and palm trees. In fact, this sunny vacation paradise has become a mecca for the rich and famous.

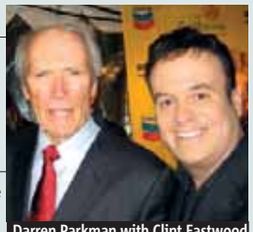
Not only did the city's late great celeb mayor Sunny Bono recreate Hollywood, with the California city's own walk of fame, he ushered in one of the most impressive film festivals in North America, right there in the middle of the Mojave.

It was a thrill for me to actually get a chance to hit the red carpet and hobnob with some of the biggest stars on the planet at a recent desert festival. The likes of none other than Leonardo DiCaprio and Clint Eastwood told me that even they were impressed with this desert oasis and what it's become. Palm Springs just has that laid back casual vibe, so it's not uncommon to see A-list celebs strolling on nearby Palm Canyon Drive, or having a drink at the very cool mid-century modern Parker Hotel, where the famous stay and play. Of course, stars have been linked to Palm Springs for many decades, and traces of that early Hollywood history still remain. Just off Palm Canyon drive, you can stroll by an unassuming house with a giant 'L' statue in the driveway. This happened to be the home of — you guessed it — flamboyant performer Liberace, who spent many happy years in the desert.

Nearby sits many other celeb getaways from a bygone era, including the homes of Kirk Douglas, Dean Martin and Marilyn Monroe. You can even rent the unassuming little rancher used by Elvis for his honeymoon with Priscilla back in the '60s. Many of the "Springs" famous old school watering holes and restaurants like Le Valeris and Melvin's have their walls covered with pics of famous regulars like Sinatra and Sammy Davis Jr. Even the city's Desert Memorial Graveyard has become a tourist attraction, where many come to pay their respects to the final resting place of Frank Sinatra.

If you go...

- **Hit the hot tub at Palm Mountain Resort and Spa.** The perfect spot to unwind in the radiance of the desert sun, just steps from Palm Canyon Drive downtown.
- **Visit the Village Pub.** Great live music and cheap drinks at this little pub. One of my favourite places in town!



Darren Parkman with Clint Eastwood in Palm Springs DARREN PARKMAN

3 LIFE

Travel in brief

Flower power

If you are looking for palm trees and white sand to escape the remnants of winter, look no farther than Philadelphia. Visitors to the city's International Flower Show can wander through a tropical paradise of sorts thanks to this year's theme, Hawaii: Islands of Aloha. a tribute to Pele, the Hawaiian goddess of fire.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the Web

Florida Keys offer rare motorcycle ride into the sun, over the sea

Walmart heiress draws art fans to the heartland of America

Crystal Bridges. New museum in Arkansas houses some of the most important pieces in the history of the United States

Crystal Bridges is regarded as the most important museum to open in the U.S. in decades, and it has done so in a city of 35,000 in the Ozark Mountains that's served by a single interstate highway that terminates in the middle of town, not far from the headquarters of Walmart Stores Inc.

More than 175,000 people have made their way to the museum in the less than four months since it opened Nov. 11.

The museum serves a busy corridor of four cities in northwest Arkansas that has nearly 500,000 people, and it's just a few minutes away from the Northwest Arkansas Regional Airport. Hotels are plentiful in the area and an upscale 21c Museum Hotel is under construction within walking distance of the museum. So far, zip code surveys of visitors show that the majority of guests — more than 80 per cent — have come from Arkansas, according to statistics provided by the museum.

The Crystal Bridges collection was amassed by Walmart heiress Alice Walton, who used her fortune to stock the galleries with paintings and sculptures that reflect the nation's artistic development and its history, from colonial times to the present. By virtue of a $20-million grant from Walmart, admission is free, as are audio tours of the collection. Some special exhibitions, none of which have yet been announced, may carry a fee.

The regular collection starts with early American paintings and moves forward chronologically. The first view offers a look at a Charles Willson Peale portrait of George Washington, the general in uniform, posed with his hand on a cannon. But in closer view is a landscape by John Taylor and a painting in classical style, Cupid and Psyche, by Benjamin West.

Farther down is the museum's centrepiece, Asher Durand's Kindred Spirits, bought by Walton in 2005 for a reported $35 million, removing the ethereal scene in the Catskill Mountains from its longtime home in the New York Public Library.

That purchase and a number of others drew howls from critics who didn't want to see beloved pieces moved to an unlikely spot in the nation's heartland. But many of the works, purchased by Walton from private collections, have never been on public display before. Organizers noted during previews that the museum's collection is just getting started. Forbes magazine lists Walton as the 10th wealthiest American with $20.9 billion to her name.

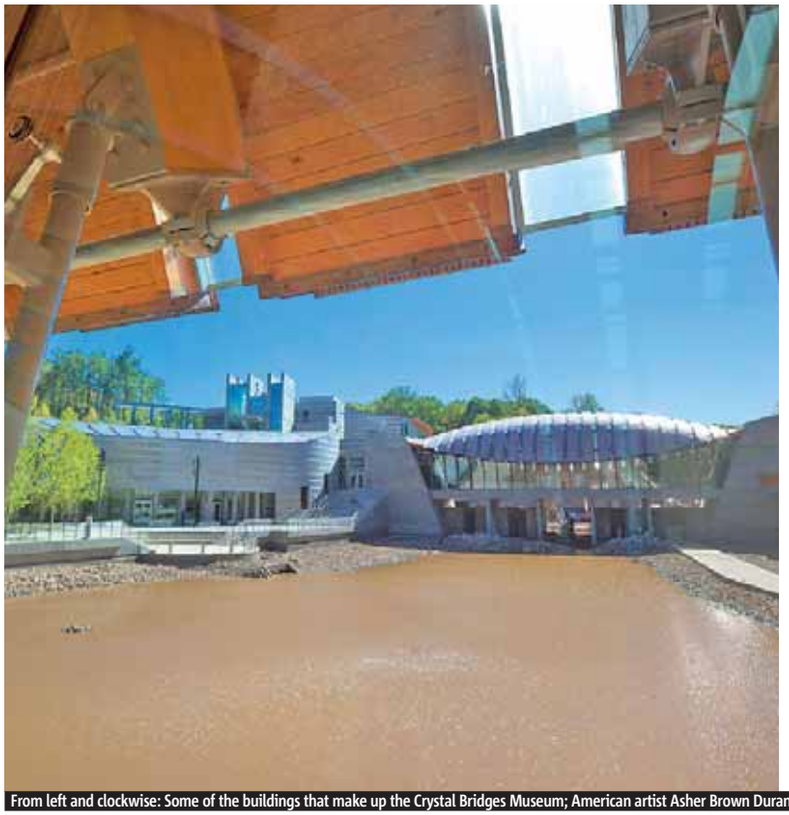
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

If you go...

Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art

- **Address.** 600 Museum Way, Bentonville, Ark.
- **Contact.** crystalbridges.org; 479-418-5700.
- **Hours.** Closed Tuesdays. Other days open 11 a.m.-6 p.m. and until 9 p.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays. Trails and grounds open sunrise to sunset. Free admission.

Visitors take in a sculpture at the museum. CHUCK BARTELS /THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



From left and clockwise: Some of the buildings that make up the Crystal Bridges Museum; American artist Asher Brown Durand's painting Kindred Spirits; Andy Warhol's Dolly Parton and Devorah Sperber's After The Last Supper THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Rockwell exhibit brings Americana to Winnipeg

Art. Iconic illustrations that romanticized American life make their debut in Canada at the Winnipeg Art Gallery

The man whose very name evokes an idealized and nostalgic picture of all things American is making his first — and only — major foray north of the border.

But anyone living outside of Winnipeg will have to travel to see Norman Rockwell's unique view of American life in person. All of his iconic illustrations — which appeared primarily on the cover of The Saturday Evening Post magazine for almost 50 years — and many of his most seminal paintings are on tour and making their one and only Canadian stop at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

The exhibit, which runs until May 20, is expected to draw not only visitors from across Canada but also many from the northern United States.

"Rockwell — beyond capturing American life ideas, issues and politics — was able to encapsulate much of the 20th century, which is often called, in the world of art, America's century," said Stephen Borys, executive director of the gallery.

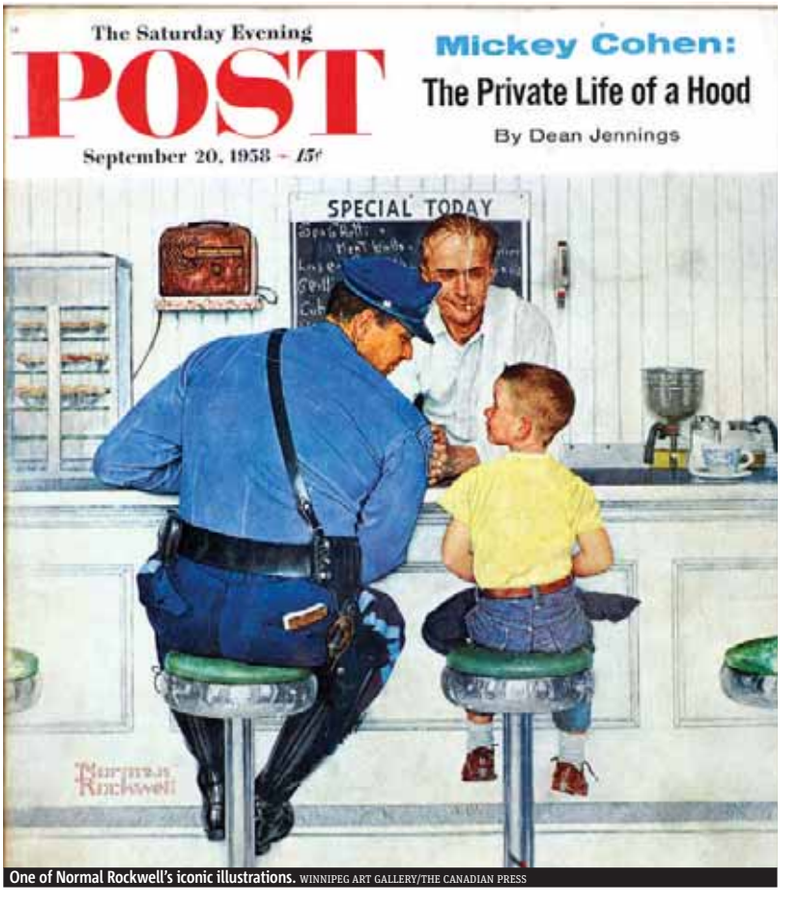
"To have one artist following the development of a nation, of a people, from the first decade of the 20th century to the eighth decade is extraordinary."

Many of Rockwell's pieces have become legendary for their Leave It To Beaver reflection of small-town America. Rockwell's work often shunned social conflict, presenting romanticized and humorous depictions of family life.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

If you go...

- **The exhibit.** American Chronicles: The Art of Norman Rockwell runs to May 20th at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Tours held on Saturday and Sunday at 2 p.m. Gallery hours: Tuesday through Sunday 11 a.m.-5 p.m., Thursday 11 a.m.-9 p.m., closed Mondays.
- **Special events.** There are a number of special events, workshops and talks associated with the exhibit including a visit by Norman Rockwell's son Peter, who will talk about his father's work on April 27 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Another talk March 11 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. will examine Rockwell's vision of America while Rockwell's role in advertising and consumer culture will be discussed April 15 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.



One of Normal Rockwell's iconic illustrations. WINNIPEG ART GALLERY/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Drink of the Week

Key Lime Smoothie

Treat yourself to a taste of the tropics with this filling breakfast smoothie.

Featuring heart-healthy walnuts and chock-full of omega-3s and fibre-rich avocado, this breakfast replacement will give you the fuel you need to kick-start your day.

1 In a blender or using a hand blender, combine all ingredients and process until smooth, about 1 minute.

- 1/2 avocado
- 1/2 small banana
- 175 ml (3/4 cup) cold water
- 75 ml (1/3 cup) walnuts, chopped into halves or crumbs
- 75 ml (1/3 cup) low-fat coconut milk
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) honey
- Juice of 1 fresh lime

MISSAVCADO.COM/ THE CANADIAN PRESS

Flavours, textures mingle in Tomato & Sweet Potato soup

Marcona almonds are entirely different than the more common California almond.

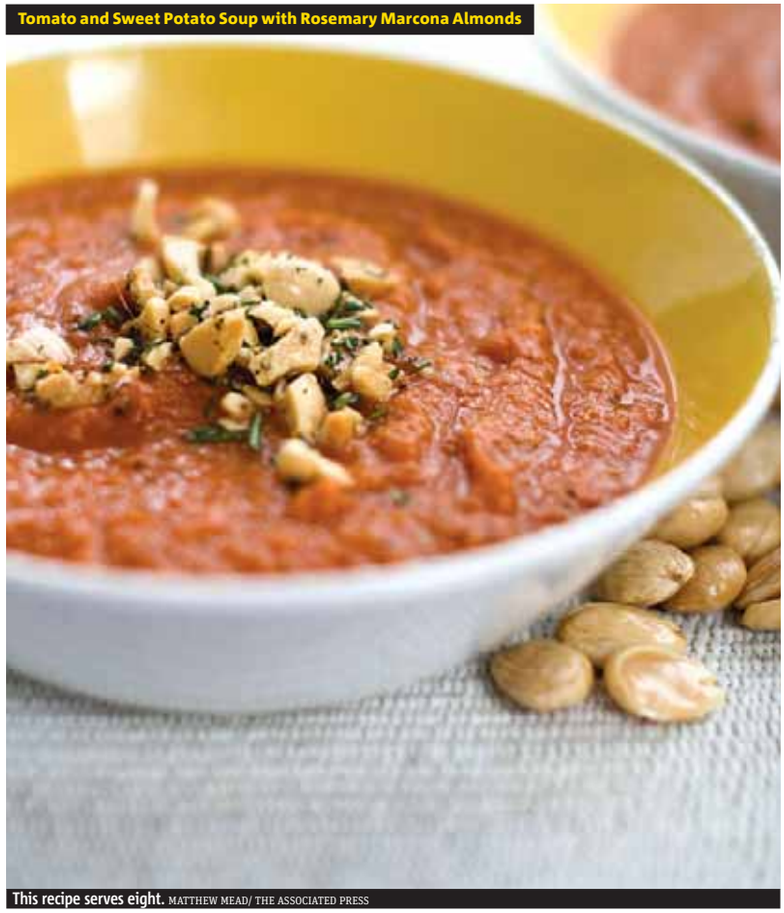
A higher fat content explains the textural difference — tender-crunchy and moist.

As for flavour, think savoury and steak-like. It doesn't hurt they're typically processed by being fried in olive oil, then sprinkled with salt.

Once only a limited import, marcona almonds now are widely available, often sold near the cheese, olives and other so-called gourmet items.

As marconas have become more popular, new varieties are appearing, including some seasoned with rosemary and others with their brown skins intact.

Tomato and Sweet Potato Soup with Rosemary Marcona Almonds



This recipe serves eight. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

- 30 ml (2 tbsp) olive oil
- 1 onion, finely diced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 500 ml (2 cups) peeled, diced sweet potato (1 large)
- 1 can (796 ml/28 oz) diced tomatoes
- 1 can (426 ml/15 oz) tomato sauce
- 500 ml (2 cups) chicken broth
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) balsamic vinegar
- Salt and ground black pe per, to taste
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) chopped marcona almonds
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) finely chopped fresh rosemary

1 In a large saucepan over medium-high, heat oil. Add onion, garlic and sweet potato. Sauté for about 10 minutes or until sweet potato starts to brown.

2 Add diced tomatoes, tomato sauce and chicken broth. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 20 minutes or until potato is very tender.

3 Working in batches if needed, transfer soup to a blender and puree until smooth. Return soup to pan, stir in vinegar and season with salt and pepper to taste.

4 In a small bowl, mix together almonds and rosemary. Ladle soup into serving bowls, then sprinkle almond mixture over each serving.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS/ THIS RECIPE WAS ADAPTED BY EMILY RICHARDS FOR METRO NEWS. EMILY IS A PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE VISIT, HER SITE EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA.

Workplace Law

When will disability justify a dismissal?

WORKPLACE LAW
Daniel Lublin
dan@canadaemploymentlawyer.com
Twitter: @danlublin

Seldom will a temporary illness justify dismissal. But what happens when a sick employee may never return to work? Can employers discard employees they view as festering on their disability insurance or must they keep their jobs available for an indefinite period of time? According to a recent Ontario case, employers may have more latitude than you think.

When Linda Fraser fell ill she did not think that she would never work again. Fraser, a long term employee of UBS Global Asset Management, was forced onto UBS' disability plan for depression and anxiety. Her departure was for good.

Fraser applied for and was granted long term disability benefits from UBS' insurance provider in 2007. According to the terms of the insurance plan, Fraser received disability payments for up to two years since she was unable to perform her job. However, after two years, Fraser no longer met the requirements for continued disability payments and the insurance company terminated her coverage.

Fraser did not tell UBS that her insurance coverage terminated and she did not return to work. Therefore, UBS fired her, claiming that her employment was "frustrated" by virtue of her illness.

The legal principle of frustration of contract means that what you have initially bargained for no longer exists. In workplace law, the issue often arises when employees are absent for an indefinite period of time, without any reasonable likelihood of returning.

If an employment contract is frustrated, then the employer has the right to walk away from the employee, without paying any severance.

Unlike other cases where it is unclear whether or not the employee would ever return to work, in this case, Fraser admitted that her disability was permanent and that she would never work again. As a result, a judge recently sided with her employer, and dismissed her case.

In the vast majority of cases, frustration of contract will be nearly impossible to prove. However, the findings of this case appear to turn that notion on its head. If an employee's prospects for recovering from an illness are dim, companies may be able to rely on this principle and avoid paying damages to an employee it ultimately fired.

DANIEL A. LUBLIN IS AN EMPLOYMENT LAWYER WITH WHITTEN & LUBLIN.

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Think outside the box when it comes to handing out your resumés. Your degree may offer more opportunities than you think. ISTOCK

The summer job search starts now

The heat is on. Many companies have already started their summer hiring; take down these tips and get yourself out there

LAUREN FRIESE
talentegg.ca

Job search outside the lines

Most students have a very narrow view of what job opportunities are available to them based on their degree, but you can potentially put your education to use in almost any industry.

For example, as a finance student, don't only apply to banks. Check out or create finance-related jobs in other industries or types of businesses that may also need people in finance, which is every industry and business!

Wonderful web

Take advantage of the free resources available to you

- **The online edge.** You will never have more free resources at your disposal than you do right now as a student, including your parents, professors and instructors, campus career centre, and online resources like TalentEgg.ca!

Start building your online presence

Develop a simple online portfolio or blog to showcase your work and include the URL on your resumés.

Don't have much work experience? Post relevant school projects, write blog posts about your industry to show how passionate you are, and display recommendations from former bosses, professors, co-workers and classmates.

Actively approach employers online

More and more employers are using online tools to market jobs and interact with potential candidates, so use them to your advantage!

Find and target the companies and people you want to work for on Twitter, LinkedIn, etc., and make an effort to interact with them.

TALENTEGG.CA IS CANADA'S LEADING JOB SITE AND ONLINE CAREER RESOURCE FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND RECENT GRADUATES.

Twitter

@TalentEgg: What was your first summer job? What did you learn?

@HumairaRiaz
It was as a trainer aide. I picked up skills like marketing and human resource management and it was a lot of fun.

@EvanBirtch
I worked in catering 4 my Summer job, taught me about listening 2 what the customer really wanted;turned into a highschool career

@aanchal_
first summer job: AMC Theatres Film Crew Member. Learned that a smile and + outlook always impresses the boss!

@xrubylin
Cashier at #CaffeArtigiano eventually became a Barista, then a manager. Currently working as an intern in #ResearchInMotion #RIM

@TalentEgg: Do you have any summer job search tips for other TalentEgg-ers?

@justinabraham
Start early and don't get easily discouraged! If you send out 10 resumes and get 2 responses, you are doing great!

@CoutureCreative
Best tip: persistence. That, and using networking and industry contacts to your advantage. Not all jobs are posted to the public.

@SaranRavindran
Keep track of applications, make a copy of job descriptions and cover letter used to apply. Simple tip, but many forget.

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Canucks eclipsed as Stars continue to rise in the West

NHL. Dallas wins for seventh time in eight games to end five-game losing streak on Vancouver ice

Tuesday's game

5	2
Stars	Canucks

Mike Ribeiro scored twice Tuesday as the surging Dallas Stars took the Pacific Division lead by beating the Vancouver Canucks 5-2.

Ribeiro's 16th goal of the season midway through the third period provided insurance when he tipped a Michael Ryder pass behind goalie Roberto Luongo.

In the second period, he gave the Stars a 2-1 lead two minutes 53 seconds after Loui Eriksson tied the game for Dallas.

Jamie Benn, who had close calls earlier in the game around the Vancouver net, gave Dallas a 3-1 lead after a Canuck defensive-zone turnover.

Stephane Robidas completed the scoring into an empty net.

Chris Higgins gave Vancouver a 1-0 lead but the Stars rallied to overcome a deficit for the second time in two games against the Canucks.

Alex Edler's long shot appeared to handcuff Dallas goalie Richard Bachman to draw the Canucks to within a goal.

Dallas (36-26-5) continued their drive for a first Western Conference playoff berth since 2008 by winning their third straight on a Western Canada road trip.

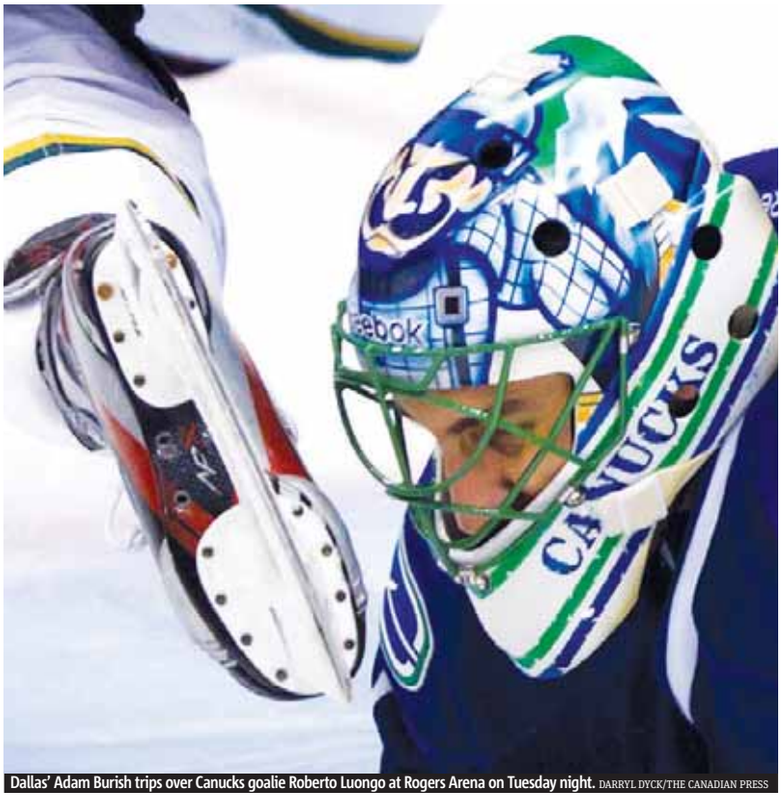
The Canucks (41-18-8) lost ground in their bid for the NHL's overall lead by dropping their second game in a row at home.

Vancouver lost a second straight game in regulation for the first time since November to fall a point behind St. Louis in the Western Conference.

New Canucks forward Zack Kassian had a penalty shot 24 seconds after the opening faceoff when the rookie was interfered with on a break-in by defender Mark Fistric.

But Kassian came up short on the great early chance, losing control of the puck during his shot.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Dallas' Adam Burish trips over Canucks goalie Roberto Luongo at Rogers Arena on Tuesday night. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Colts, Manning breakup imminent: Report

Peyton Manning and the Colts will part ways on Wednesday, according to an ESPN report. ANDY LYONS/GETTY IMAGES FILE

The Peyton Manning era in Indianapolis is expected to end Wednesday, according to a report.

Citing anonymous sources, ESPN reported Tuesday that the Colts plan to hold a news conference to announce the long-expected decision. Manning is expected to attend.

Team owner Jim Irsay and Manning's agent, Tom Condon, did not immediately respond to messages left by The Associated Press. Team spokesman Avis Roper said he could not confirm the decision or the news conference because Irsay was out of town and unreachable.

Peyton's older brother, Cooper, told USA Today in a phone interview that he had spoken to his brother earlier Tuesday.

"He's going through kind of an emotional time right now," Cooper said. "Until it was over, he was a Colt through and through."

Manning turns 36 later this month, and missed the entire 2011 season after a third neck surgery.

He is owed a $28-million US roster bonus on Thursday, and with the Colts holding the top draft pick, they apparently have decided it was too risky and pricey to keep the four-time MVP. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Injury timeline

- **During the 2009 off-season, after a Super Bowl loss,** Manning had his first neck surgery.
- **Then, after an early playoff exit in 2010,** he had another neck surgery to repair a nerve causing weakness in his arm.
- **Last July, Manning** signed a five-year, $90-million US extension. But the nerve did not heal as quickly as expected and Manning had two vertebrae fused together, forcing him to miss the season.

NHL

Cautious Crosby cleared for contact

Pittsburgh Penguins captain Sidney Crosby has been cleared for contact, a big step toward his return from concussion-like symptoms. Crosby insisted there is still no timetable on when he'll be cleared to play in a game. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Leafs re-up with centre Grabovski

The Toronto Maple Leafs signed centre Mikhail Grabovski to a $27.5-million US, five-year contract extension on Tuesday. He was due to become an unrestricted free agent July 1.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mikhail Grabovski
JAMIE SABAU/GETTY IMAGES FILE

NFL

Saints brass take bounty blame

New Orleans coach Sean Payton and general manager Mickey Loomis take "full responsibility" for the bounty program run by former assistant coach Gregg Williams and said it will never happen again.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB

"It's like when you're getting remarried and you are renewing your vows. That's how I feel."

Centre-fielder Andrew McCutchen, who agreed to a to a six-year, $51.5-million US deal with the Pittsburgh Pirates Tuesday.

4 SPORTS

Curling

"It's not fun in that one of us has to lose. We really need that win so we're going to have to come out and play well."

Alberta skip Kevin Koe on his upcoming match at the Tim Hortons Brier against his brother, Jamie, who skips the Yukon and Northwest Territories. The brothers clash in Saskatoon on Wednesday morning. Alberta sat in a tie atop the leaderboard with Ontario at 6-1 after Tuesday's evening play while the surprising team from the Territories were in second with a 5-2 record.

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Softer grille is the new style

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Four-wheel-drive

When the going gets tough, the Pilot's available four-wheel-drive system (VTM-4) automatically engages to direct additional torque to the rear wheels as needed before the fronts lose traction.

Power is also distributed aft when accelerating from a stop on slippery surfaces.

Passenger pleasure

For enhanced passenger pleasure, the Pilot has improved noise-reducing seals beneath the body panels, added insulation inside the door pillars and "quieter" acoustic windshield glass.

The cabin features a restyled dashboard, gauges and central panel stack.

2012 Honda Pilot

- **Type.** Four-door, front-/four-wheel-drive eight-passenger sport utility vehicle.
- **Engine (hp):** 3.5-litre SOHC V6.
- **Mileage:** L/100 km (city/hwy) 11.8/7.8 (FWD).
- **Base Price (incl. destination):** $36,400.

The Pilot's 3.5-litre V6 produces 250 horsepower.

Engine

Honda has coaxed greater operating economy from the standard 250-horsepower 3.5-litre V6 with internal-friction-reducing coatings, by improving alternator performance and with higher efficiency spark plugs. Additional mods include a more efficient power-steering pump.

Review. Honda charts a slight course correction for its popular all-roader

MALCOLM GUNN
Wheelbase Media

It has been said that the eyes are the window to the soul. In automotive terms, perhaps the same can be said for the grille.

More specifically, Honda's eight-passenger Pilot that was redesigned for the 2009 model year projected a go-anywhere strength and ruggedness.

Too tough, maybe. A restyle for 2012 softens the look for friendlier, more aesthetically pleasing demeanor.

Added to the grille adjustment, the Pilot receives new headlamps along with new and repositioned turn signals and a revised front air dam that reduces fuel-robbing aerodynamic drag.

What remains pretty much hidden from view is the Pilot's familial connection to Honda's premium-division Acura MDX.

Both of these unique wagons share the same basic platform, but from that point the comparison pretty much ends.

The Pilot's squared-off shape reinforces its sport utility-vehicle leanings, although ground-clearance limitations restrict the fun to boulder-free terrain and shin-deep – as opposed to knee-deep – mud. Even so, fording a 48-centimetre-deep body of standing water is apparently no problem for this rig.

Taken in its entirety, the modestly tweaked 2012 Pilot isn't a whole lot different.

But in a category where impressions count, this Honda puts its best face forward and backs it up with sufficient comfort and capability to win the day.

The biggest change in the cabin is the centrestack switchgear and gadgetry.

A look at the rear of the Pilot.

By comparison

1 Mazda CX-9
Base price: $30,200

2 Nissan Pathfinder
Base price: $29,400

3 Toyota Highlander
Base price: $28,900

5 DRIVE

Top Gear

Keychain link

Auto-themed keychains make excellent and inexpensive gifts for the car fanatic in your friends and/or family circle, including, of course, yourself. And a wide selection can be located at everythingcarz.com, among other online stores, including miniature disc brakes, gear-shift levers, steering wheels, along with tire/wheel and seat belt/buckle combos.

Wrangle up a Hemi

The folks at American Expedition Vehicles (AEV) can help turn your tepid Jeep Wrangler into one heck of a boonie basher with the help of the company's Hemi conversion kit. The standard $4,000 package includes the correct engine mounts, steering hardware, an aluminum radiator, wiring harness and the appropriate powertrain control module. aev-conversions.com.

On the Web

Scan code for more car reviews and news

Lexus reliability is apparent in ES lineup

Second Gear.
2002 to 2006 Lexus ES

JUSTIN PRITCHARD
Drive@metronews.ca

The Lexus ES was intended as a purely luxurious car from Toyota's upscale brand.

The Lexus IS line handled entry-level luxury-sportiness, leaving the ES a step above as an affordable luxury-focused model.

If it's an easygoing and laid-back luxury car you're after, the ES should do the trick.

Feature content included push-button engine start, Mark Levinson audio, steering wheel-mounted audio controls and wood trim.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Engine

Early models got Toyota's 3.0 litre V6 with 210 horsepower and 220 lb.-ft of torque. For 2004, a larger 3.3-litre V6 was used, delivering 225 horsepower and 240 lb.-ft of torque.

What Owners Like

Styling, a premium feel, comfort levels, noise levels and safety equipment levels were all highly rated by Lexus ES owners. Fuel mileage is also typically commented positively upon.

What Owners Dislike

Complaints centre around plain styling, a soft suspension and a numb, disconnected steering feel. The ES is not a car for driving enthusiasts.

Common Issues

The big issue with this car is the gearbox. The problem isn't necessarily a mechanical defect but a software issue within the transmission computer.

An update was made available at dealerships, but results seem mixed at best. Be sure to 'feel' the ES you're driving for signs of sloppy gearshifts, hesitation or hard shifting.

Have these issues remedied if they're present, before agreeing to purchase.

Also, have the ES you're considering checked for proper alignment, and be sure all interior electronics work as expected. The condition of the tires and brakes should be checked as well.

Verdict

An ES free of transmission-related issues that's been properly cared for should provide years of luxurious and trouble-free driving alongside top-notch resale value.

American luxury brands get hipper and younger, with hipper, younger design talent

Autopilot

AUTO PILOT
Mike Goetz
drive@metronews.ca

Not saying every recreational golfer in Florida over the age of 70 prefers a big, white Cadillac, just saying there might be a few.

Cadillac certainly appreciates its older clientele, but like all domestic luxury makes, it probably wouldn't mind a few more buyers who didn't prefer elastic-waistband jeans worn nice and high over the hip.

It's no secret that younger customers who shop in luxury segments seem to have taken more of a shining to offshore-based makes, like Audi, Mercedes-Benz, Lexus, etc.

Cadillac has already made huge demographic ground on those makes over the last decade, by introducing very edgy, modern-looking machinery. The upcoming XTS and ATS models will certainly push the median Cadillac buyer ages younger.

Lincoln designer Max Wolff was at this year's Toronto auto show. MIKE GOETZ/FOR METRO

Lincoln, on the other hand, is still waiting for its bigger turnaround. It won't be long in coming. Over the last 18 months Lincoln has been completely re-organized, re-staffed and re-focussed. For one thing, it now has a separate design office and staff apart from Ford, within the mothership's sprawling facilities in Dearborn, Michigan.

And the new man heading up Lincoln design embodies pretty much what Lincoln hopes to become — Max Wolff is youngish (39), fashionable, worldly, and driven. His last gig was at GM, where he did work at Cadillac, and at GM's design studios in Australia and Korea. The move to bring the Australian to Lincoln about 12 months ago makes perfect sense — if you want your vehicles to be hipper and younger, why not hire younger, hipper people to create them?

The personable Wolff was at the Toronto auto show this year, accompanying the Lincoln MKZ Concept.

"The MKZ concept is an indication of where we want to take the brand going forward, and it certainly doesn't have any aesthetic link to any Lincoln of the past," noted Wolff.

"We want to start communicating that a bit more, that Lincoln is a progressive luxury brand and we're looking forward more so than backwards."

Buick is another domestic luxury brand hoping to attract a younger demographic, and it also appears to be leaning on young design talent to get there.

At the Detroit auto show I met Magdelena Kokoszynsku, one of the interior designers for Buick's new, compact crossover, called Encore.

Young and female, she seems an antithesis to what one might perceive to be the typical Buick target customer, but she begs to differ…

"Our generation doesn't yet have that relationship (with Buick). For us, it's almost like a fresh brand. I've never seen Buick as an 'old person' vehicle. To me, it's new, fresh, and up and coming brand."

Buick recruited the native New Yorker directly from art school.

Another force pushing American luxury makes forward, whether they like it or not, is the global nature of the auto industry.

They need to create vehicles that speak to luxury customers in every part of the world, and not just those white-panted golfers in the Sunshine State.

Correction

- In last week's column a Canadian Tire spokesperson was incorrectly named. His name is Jordan Shiffman.

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- Overhead console
- Power sliding rear window

2012 CANADIAN TRUCK KING CHALLENGE WINNER

2012 Ram 1500 Crew Cab Laramie shown.§

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RamTruck.ca/Offers

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Time machine in Chile

Autoknow. Revisiting 1988 with the help of a Hyundai Elantra

GARRY SOWERBY
Wheelbase Media

Life is comfortable inside the Hyundai Elantra GLS.

It's quiet too, except for the flipping-map-page sounds that my wife Lisa Calvi is making.

We are relaxed and joke about all the things we'll do on our escape from North America's gloomy, frozen winter.

Traffic is speedy on the four-lane freeway and even though the cruise control is set precisely at the 120 km/h speed limit, almost every car on the road is passing us. In the late afternoon the sun is high, looking more like noon.

My mind wanders then focuses on the last time I drove this Chilean section of the Pan American Highway. That was 25 years ago and instead of motoring south to the Colchugua Valley in a nimble and sporty Elantra, it was north in a diesel pick-up truck. It wasn't my loving wife beside me but burley Montana-based Rolling Stone magazine writer Tim Cahill.

The interior of the Elantra is neat and tidy. There's perfect instrumentation, my iPhone on the centre console and laptop computers in the back seat beside a Nikon digital camera.

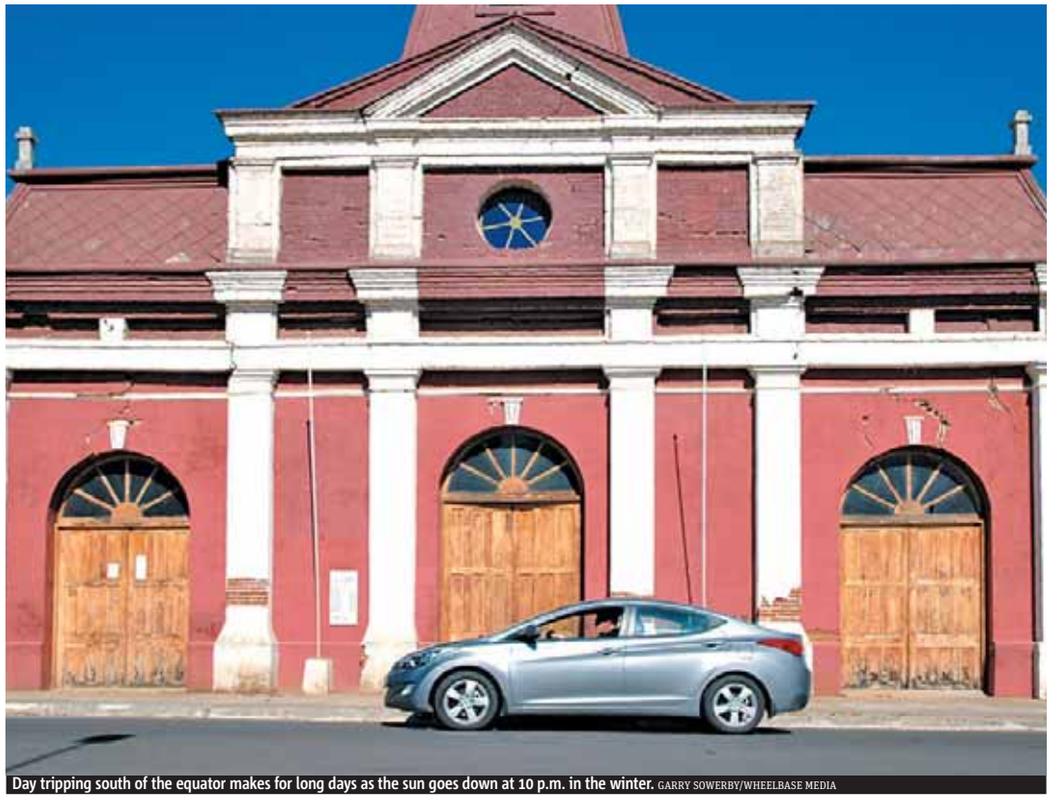
Want to touch base with home? Simply pick up that iPhone and call, text or email. No need, we'll be in Santa Cruz, hub of the Colchugua Valley winery area, settled into the cosy Hotel TerraVina in an hour. Our biggest problem will be deciding whether to try the upscale Italian Restaurant across the vineyard or the cute Peruvian one down the road for a late sunset dinner.

Quote

"Driving Chilean secondary roads is like playing an arcade game. Traffic moves at a lively clip and tailgating seems a national sport as drivers prepare to pass."
Garry Sowerby

Twenty-five years ago when Tim and I were at this point in the first production 1988 GMC 3500 diesel Sierra pick-up, things were different. We had driven non-stop for three days from Ushuaia on the Argentina side of Tierra del Fuego, about the same duration since Lisa and I arrived in Santiago.

The Sierra was filthy inside and out. Tired and wound tight with what lay ahead, we looked and smelled the part; bleary-eyed young men bent on setting a new record for the quickest time from the bottom to the top of the Americas to set a Guinness record. We were hoping to rendezvous with a container ship in Carthana, Columbia on Day 11 of the quest. We had no iPhone, laptop computers or digital cameras because they did not exist. Texting, email, fax machines or a freeway Chilean sector of the Pan American Highway? Dream on.



Day tripping south of the equator makes for long days as the sun goes down at 10 p.m. in the winter. GARRY SOWERBY/WHEELBASE MEDIA

"Take the Carrtera del Vino exit four kilometres past San Fernando then its about 45 minutes to the hotel." Lisa snaps me out of the daydream.

Over the next week we slip into vacation mode as every day seems like two. With sunset close to 10 p.m. winter days are long that far south of the equator. Life at Hotel TerraVina surrounded by a seemingly endless vineyard is relaxed.

A week in Chile's premium wine-making area tucked in the Andean foothills 200 kilometres south of the sprawling capital Santiago is like an all-inclusive holiday, indeed. However, rather than being trapped in the confines of a Caribbean or Mexican beach resort with throngs of North American vacationers, Colchagua Valley with its meandering back roads, superb wineries and funky commercial hub, Santa Cruze, is a resort all its own.

On the 11th day, we load the Hyundai for the three-hour drive back to Santiago and our flight home. As I set the Elantra's cruise control at 120 km/h, I look over at Lisa. She is tanned and relaxed as she checks e-mail on her iPhone.

"There's a message here from the airline," she says. "Looks like the Business Class upgrades have come through."

How times change.

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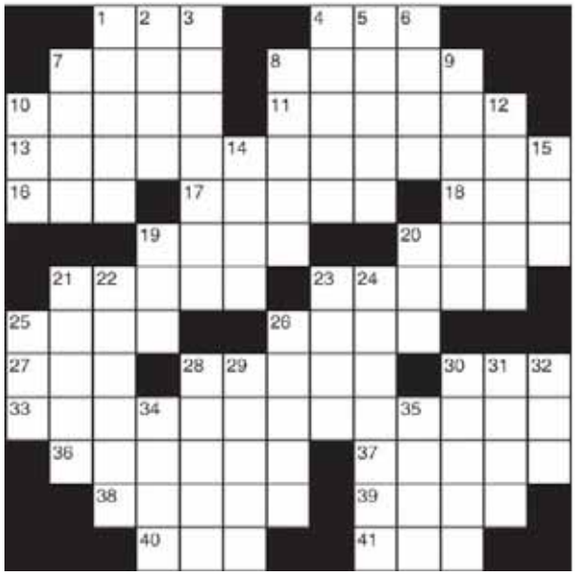
Crossword



Across

1 Animation frame
4 "Undeniably"
7 Pop
8 Knighted women
10 Dark
11 Gather
13 Paid
16 Possess
17 66, for example
18 Dead heat
19 "Green Acres" setting
20 Old fogy
21 2009 news-making pilot, familiarly
23 San Diego athlete
25 Sicilian spouter
26 Small pie
27 In favor of
28 Paces
30 Glutton
33 Behaving
36 Throw off the tracks
37 Particular occasion
38 Type of cotton thread
39 Tittle
40 That woman
41 Bookkeeper (Abbr.)

Down

1 Punctuation marks
2 Rewrite, maybe
3 Sideways
4 Pleasure boat
5 Host
6 Belgrade native
7 Winter forecast
8 Fact
9 Swain
10 Venusian vessel?
12 Drop a sound
14 "Finding Nemo" character
15 Virgo neighbor
19 Orlando st.
20 Banned pesticide
21 Got up
22 Play out, as fishing line
23 Maze option
24 "— and Old Lace"
25 Sala-mander
26 Piece of info on a marquee
28 Grit your teeth
29 Spry
30 1492 craft
31 Erstwhile Peruvian
32 "Gosh!"
34 Rainbow
35 Circle

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

Monday's answer

Sudoku

4					6		1	8
			5					7
8			1				2	
			8	9	5		4	
	2						6	
	9		7	6	2			
	8				1			3
3					7			
7	5		9					2

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer

6	2	5	1	7	9	8	4
8	7	9	4	3	6	1	2
3	4	1	2	8	5	6	9
2	9	3	7	4	1	5	8
7	1	6	8	5	2	9	3
5	8	4	6	9	3	2	7
9	5	7	3	1	8	4	6
1	3	2	9	6	4	7	5
4	6	8	5	2	7	3	1

Send a kiss

- **MY MAN.** okay maybe not today, but tomorrow or that next day for sure. i dont even know why were arguing anyways LOL but i waanna talk to you so imma do it, it would be easier if you would meet me in the library by those round tables at the back at 1124. Ill be waiting:P love you From extraextralious
- **Vikky Prince.** hi tori you dont know how happy i am its true you promised to come here to your home but didnt still i am glad that you are in calgary and with your family HAPPY FREEDOME. From Jose
- **Bimmervalt Secret Crush.** It has been 8 months and my feelings for you get deeper and deeper by the second. I love you although you don't. I know I'm such a loser!!! From Loser
- **Blitz.** I had such a good time being big spoon last night, you are the perfect little spoon. Call me so we can do it again soon! From TheGayGhost
- **Sexy Redhead in Eng Phys.** I think I have the eigenfunction, to satisfy your eigenvalue problem. Nerd love <3. From Eng Phys Lady to be

Horoscope

♈ Aries | March 21 - April 20. Someone on the work front is giving you a hard time at the moment but you are advised to stay calm and not let your anger get the better of you

♉ Taurus | April 21 - May 21. You will defend someone you don't much like today.

♊ Gemini | May 22 - June 20. If you fear the worst today then the worst will most likely happen.

♋ Cancer | June 21 - July 22. The approaching full moon warns there is a real chance you will bite off more than you can chew and end up looking silly.

♌ Leo | July 23 - Aug. 22. You will either get an extraordinary amount of work done today or no work at all

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23 - Sept. 22. You feel you deserve more than you are currently getting, and no doubt you are right, but it won't just happen as if by magic.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23 - Oct. 22. This could be and should be a beneficial time for you, but good things won't just fall into your lap.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23 - Nov. 21. You will get lucky in some way today, but you may feel guilty about it as those around you have to deal with a series of misfortunes.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22 - Dec. 21. Someone in a position of authority will put you to the test over the next few days and you will need all your mental and emotional strength to win through.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22 - Jan 20. Don't waste your time on people who are either too lazy or too stupid to work things out for themselves.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21 - Feb 18. Give your mind and body a rest over the next 24 hours

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19 - March 20. Believe in yourself and have faith in your abilities.

SALLY BROMPTON

JONATHAN HAYWARD / THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Caption Contest

"Like two conjoined twins in a pod!"
AL

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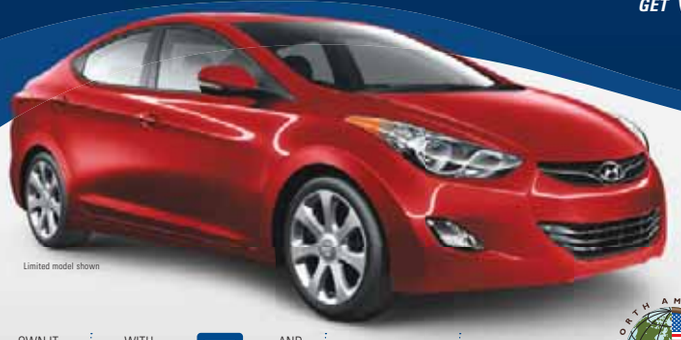

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BONUS 7 YEAR WARRANTY 120,000 KM COMPREHENSIVE LIMITED WARRANTY

Limited model shown

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GLS model shown

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HIGHWAY 8.5L/100 KM 33 MPG▼

BONUS 7 YEAR WARRANTY 120,000 KM COMPREHENSIVE LIMITED WARRANTY

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D#30780

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"The Hyundai names, logos, product names, feature names, images and slogans are trademarks owned by Hyundai Auto Canada Corp. †Finance offers available O.A.C. from Hyundai Financial Services based on a new 2012 Elantra L 6-Speed Manual/Elantra Touring L 5-Speed Manual/Sonata GL 6-Speed Manual/Santa Fe GL 2.4 6-Speed Manual/Veracruz GL FWD Auto with an annual finance rate of 1.9%/0%/0%/0%/0% for 84/84/84/84/84 months. Bi-weekly payment is $102/$93/$134/$142/$186. No down payment is required. Cost of Borrowing is $1,185/$0/$0/$0/$0. Finance offers include Delivery and Destination of $1,495/$1,565/$1,760/$1,760. Registration, insurance, PPSA, fees, levies, charges, license fees and all applicable taxes are excluded. Delivery and destination charge includes freight, P.D.E., dealer admin fees and a full tank of gas. Financing example: 2012 Elantra L 6-Speed for $17,344 at 1.9% per annum equals $102 bi-weekly for 84 months for a total obligation of $18,529. Cash price is $17,344. Cost of Borrowing is $1,185. Example price includes Delivery and Destination of $1,495. Registration, insurance, PPSA, fees, levies, charges, license fees and all applicable taxes are excluded. Delivery and destination charge includes freight, P.D.E., dealer admin fees and a full tank of gas. ♦Prices for models shown: 2012 Elantra Limited/2012 Elantra Touring GLS Manual/2012 Sonata Limited/2012 Santa Fe Limited 3.5 AWD/2012 Veracruz GLS AWD is $24,194/$22,144/$31,464/$37,559/$41,759. Delivery and Destination charges of $1,495/$1,495/$1,565/$1,760/$1,760 are included. Registration, insurance, PPSA, fees, levies, charges, license fees and all applicable taxes are excluded. Delivery and destination charge includes freight, P.D.E., dealer admin fees and a full tank of gas. ♦♦Prices (HWY 5.7L/100KM). City 8.7L/100KM)/2012 Santa Fe GL 2.4L 6-Speed Manual FWD (HWY 7.7L/100KM. City 11.0L/100KM)/2012 Veracruz GL FWD (HWY 8.5L/100KM. City 12.7L/100KM) are based on Energuide. Actual fuel efficiency may vary based on driving conditions and the addition of certain vehicle accessories. Fuel economy figures are used for comparison purposes only. ‡Purchase or lease a new 2012 Elantra Touring L, GL, or GLS and you will be entitled to a $500 factory to Dealer credit. Factory to Dealer credit applies before taxes. ◊Offers cannot be combined or used in conjunction with any other available credits. Offer is non-transferable and cannot be assigned. No vehicle trade-in required. ΩPurchase or lease a 2012 Elantra/Elantra Touring/Sonata/ Santa Fe/Veracruz during the Double Savings Event and you will receive a Preferred Price Petro-Canada Gas Card worth $160 (2012 Elantra/$250 (